CITY HILIGHTS

The Truth Speaks

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Bihar's 10dulkar to take oath today

Stage set for Nitish 10.0; the focus now shifts to the contours of the new Bihar cabinet after a historic return of NDA

PATNA

Nitish Kumar is set to take the oath as the Chief Minister of Bihar for a record 10th time, leading a new National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government.

The NDA on Wednesday unanimously elected Nitish Kumar as the coalition's legislative party leader in the Bihar Assembly. He was elected as leader of the JDU legislature party in a meeting at the party office earlier. He followed it up by tendering his resignation to Governor Arif Mohammad Khan and staking a claim to form the new government. He also submitted the list of all 202 NDA MLAs to the Governor.

Khan accepted Nitish's resignation and invited him to form the new government. He also asked him to continue as the caretaker chief minister till then. The 17th Bihar Legislative Assembly was also dissolved (on Wednesday) as per the recommendations of the state cabinet submitted to the governor.

Senior NDA leaders Union minister Chirag Paswan, outgoing deputy chief ministers Samrat Choudhary, Vijay Kumar Sinha, outgoing Bihar minister Vijay Kumar Choudhary, Rajya Sabha member Upendra Kushwaha and others accompanied him to the Raj Bhavan.

The newly-elected BJP lawmakers chose Samrat Choudhary as their legislative party leader and Vijay Kumar Sinha as deputy leader. They will continue as Bihar deputy chief ministers.

The swearing-in ceremony of the new government will be held at Patna's historic Gandhi Maidan on Thursday. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, and other BJP leaders and chief ministers from the NDA-ruled states are expected to attend the ceremony amid tight security arrangements in place.

The NDA stormed to power in Bihar, winning 202 seats in the 243-member assembly, with the BJP bagging 89, the JDU 85, the LJP(RV) 19, the HAM 5 and the RLM 4.

SEAT TALLY	
Total seats	243
Magic number	122
NDA	202
MGB	35
JSP	0
Others	6

Chief Minister: Nitish Kumar
Deputy Chief Ministers: Samrat Chaudhary (Tarapur seat - BJP) and Vijay Kumar Sinha (Lakhisarai - BJP)

Oath-taking ceremony:
Gandhi Maidan, Patna
11:30 am, November 20

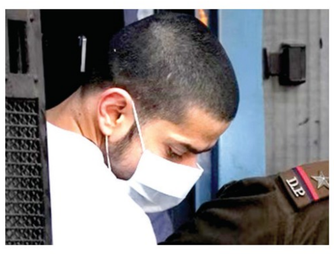
NIA gets 11-day custody of gangster Bishnoi

NEW DELHI

Anmol Bishnoi, brother and close associate of jailed gangster Lawrence Bishnoi, was produced before the special National Investigation Agency (NIA) Court at Patiala House here on Wednesday following his arrest after his deportation from the US to India on Tuesday.

The NIA secured 11-day custody of the gangster, who is accused in the Baba Siddique assault case as well as the conspiracy behind the murder of Punjabi singer Sidhu Moosewala.

According to sources, the NIA discreetly moved Anmol out of the Delhi Airport due to security concerns before bringing him to court.



In a statement, the NIA said Anmol is the 19th accused to be arrested for his involvement in the terror-syndicate led by his brother Lawrence. He had been on the run since 2022 and was charged in March 2023 for allegedly helping his brother and designated 'terrorist' Goldy Brar carry out terror activities between 2020 and 2023.

He is a key accused in the murder of Baba Siddique, a former Maharashtra minister and Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader, who was shot dead in Mumbai last year, it stated.

He also faces at least 18 criminal cases, including his alleged involvement in the firing outside Bollywood actor Salman Khan's residence in April last year and the murder of a Punjabi Singer, Sidhu Moosewala, in 2022. Originally from Punjab's Fazilka district, Anmol was on NIA's list of 'most wanted' individuals and has a reward of ₹10 lakh on his name.

The NIA further stated that Anmol escaped India using a forged passport, travelling through Nepal, then moving to Dubai and Kenya before eventually making his way to the US.

NIA charges against Anmol Bishnoi

- Actively aided designated individual terrorist Goldy Brar and Lawrence Bishnoi in the commission of various acts of terrorism in the country during the 2020-2023 period.
- Ran terror syndicates and executed terrorist acts, in association with the Bishnoi gang, while hiding in the US.
- Actively engaged in extortion in India from the foreign soil with the help of other gangsters.
- Extended logistical support to shooters and their ground operatives of the Lawrence Bishnoi gang.

Hawk Force inspector martyred during anti-Naxal op

MUMBAI

Inspector Ashish Sharma of the Madhya Pradesh Police's elite anti-Naxal unit, the Hawk Force, was martyred in action during an early-morning encounter with armed Naxal cadres in the dense forests near the MP–Chhattisgarh–Maharashtra tri-junction on Wednesday. Ashish (40), a decorated officer with two gallantry medals, sustained fatal bullet injuries and succumbed.

Corpus fund of ₹1 cr to be set up in KSPCB: CM

BENGALURU

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Wednesday said that a corpus fund of ₹1 crore would be set up in Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB).

Speaking at the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the KSPCB, he said that programmes would be organised every year from the interest earned from this deposit. An award would be instituted in the name of environmentalist Saalumarada Thimmakka, who passed away recently, and five environmentalists would be awarded annually.

He appealed to the citizens to join hands with the government to make Bengaluru plastic-free by 2030. "Bengaluru city alone generates 900 tonnes of plastic. It can become plastic-free only if only through public awareness and people join hands with the government," the CM said.

He said that Bengaluru was often criticised as a garbage city, but the government's goal was to make it garbage-free.

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CMofKarnataka | https://dipr.karnataka.gov.in | karnataka information

QUICK READ

Beloved Vidhana Soudha lift operator passes away

Bengaluru

Krishnappa, a retired lift operator at Vidhana Soudha, passed away suddenly. He had faithfully served for over 32 years, helping transport the Chief Minister, dignitaries, and staff across the state secretariat. Having retired in July, Krishnappa had returned to submit his pension papers but tragically suffered a severe heart attack overnight. Colleagues said he did not wake up in the morning. Known for his friendly nature, he was also familiar with media personnel covering events at Vidhana Soudha. His sudden demise has left coworkers and friends mourning the loss of a dedicated and warm-hearted colleague.

Institute shares support for farmers through webcast

Bengaluru

ICAR–NBAIR in Bengaluru organised a live webcast of the 'Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN)' programme for farmers at its Yelahanka campus. The event helped many small and marginal farmers understand the benefits of the scheme. Dr. K. Sudhakar, Member of Parliament from Chikkaballapura, attended as the chief guest, while former Kolar MP Shri S. Muniswamy was present as the guest of honour. The programme began with Dr. T. Venkatesan explaining the institute's work and how its activities support farmers in the region. In his speech, Dr. Sudhakar said the PM-KISAN scheme has been very helpful to farmers since its launch in 2019. He noted that almost ₹3,91,000 crore has already been sent directly to nearly nine crore farmers across the country. Under the 21st instalment alone, he said that ₹18,000 crore will reach farmers' bank accounts. He praised ICAR–NBAIR for promoting natural farming and simple eco-friendly methods to help farmers grow safe food, fodder, and fibre.

CM, HM must bring law and order in state or resign: BJP

'Repeated warnings were given whenever cases of violence against women, rape, and murder occurred, yet the govt failed to act effectively'

BENGALURU

Member of the Legislative Council (MLC) Keshav Prasad has strongly criticised the state government for what he described as a serious breakdown in law and order.

Addressing the media at the state BJP state here on Wednesday, he said the Chief Minister and Home Minister must immediately take firm steps to control the situation, or resign from their posts. He said that repeated warnings were given whenever cases of violence against women, rape, and murder occurred, yet the government failed to act effectively.

Keshav Prasad said the government's statements lacked seriousness and that words must be followed by action. He pointed out that no officer was punished in the case where prisoners in jail received royal treatment. Instead, only a meeting was held. He also accused the government of weakening police morale during the recent stampede case. He said the government itself was responsible for the present situation and announced that he would launch a strong protest. He further shared figures showing a sharp rise in crime.

Retired IPS officer Bhaskar Rao, who also addressed the media, said crimes against women have risen since the present government took office. He mentioned the incident in Udupi where a camera was secretly placed in a women's toilet and ignored. He also noted that groups clashed openly in front of the Vidhana Soudha, showing a complete collapse of law and order.

He added that an Israeli woman was raped in broad daylight in Hampi, and crimes against migrant workers were going unnoticed. Robberies and extortion, he said, were also rising. He criticised the government for not filling 25,000 vacant posts in the police department and said corruption in recruitment had lowered police morale. He also pointed out that the Mahila Suraksha App was not functioning properly.

MLA Somashekhar hails Indira's inspiring legacy

KENGERI

MLA ST Somashekhar praised former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, calling her one of India's strongest and most capable leaders. He was speaking at the 108th birth anniversary celebration of Indira Gandhi, held near the Indira Canteen in Kengeri by local Congress workers.

During the ceremony, he laid wreaths at her portrait and helped distribute sarees and blankets to more than 500 poor residents and civic workers, saying her work still guides the nation.

Somashekhar said the contribution of the Nehru family to India's progress is remarkable. He noted that Indira Gandhi played a major role in removing poverty, strengthening the economy, and improving India's global standing. Along with leading the country, she maintained strong international relations and always placed national development at the center of her decisions. He added that she devoted herself fully to the Congress organization and worked tirelessly to improve the lives of ordinary citizens.

He highlighted the famous 20-point programme introduced by Indira Gandhi, which focused on poverty eradication and welfare. Even today, he said, people in many villages remember how these programmes brought hope and support. Her honest service, disciplined leadership, and deep commitment to the nation continue to inspire today's youth and Congress workers.

Local leaders and party members also attended the event. Among them were former Zilla Panchayat member Shivamadaya, Kengeri Block Congress President Mylasandra Nagaraj, Block General Secretary Santosh B.V., and Ward Presidents T. Prabhakar, Arun Kumar, Amrit Gowda, K.R. Murthy, Y. Krishna, Purushottam, and K.C. Sathish. Several women leaders including Parvati, Kantha, Padma Harish, Geetha, Radha, and Vidya were also present, showing strong support for the event and its message.

BNCC chief lauds workers for effective waste segregation

BENGALURU

The Bengaluru North City Corporation (BNCC) carried out a field inspection at the Mallasandra Mustering Point, where Commissioner Pommala Sunil Kumar reviewed the ongoing cleanliness work and spoke about the importance of improving waste management practices.

During the visit, he appreciated the efforts made by staff in segregating waste properly.

He also pointed out that there is still room for improvement and instructed officials to make the necessary changes. He stressed that the mustering centre should always remain clean, organised, and ready for daily operations without delay.

The Commissioner later examined the progress of several Engineering Department projects, including the pipeline drainage work taking place in the area. He advised officials to install footpath slabs quickly so that the public, especially pedestrians, can move safely and without inconvenience. Keeping the walkways clear and functional, he said, is essential for the safety of local residents.

Joint Commissioner Smt. Pallavi, Solid Waste Management Assistant General Manager Shri Lohith, and other officials accompanied the Commissioner during this inspection. Their presence ensured that all departments involved understood the instructions clearly and could take prompt action.

A Rabies Awareness Program was also held at the Krishi Mela on the GKVK campus. The event was organised in partnership with Team CARE and Mission Rabies. More than 5,000 people attended, including members of the Traffic Department, Home Guards, Police Department, and students from New Horizon College and REVA University.

The sessions explained how to identify rabies, the common symptoms seen in infected animals, and the safety steps citizens should follow. It also aimed to help the public stay informed, act responsibly, and reduce risks through timely awareness.

BNCC phone-in prog tomorrow to hear grievances

Bengaluru North City Corporation (BNCC) has started a helpful way for citizens to share their worries directly with the Commissioner. To make sure people's problems are heard quickly, Commissioner Shri Pommala Sunil Kumar holds a special "Phone-In Programme" every Friday. This simple effort aims to bring officials closer to the public and solve local problems without delay. The next phone-in session will take place on Friday (November 21) from 7:00 am to 9 am. During these two hours, the Commissioner will personally answer calls from citizens, listen to their concerns, and guide officials to take fast action. This direct contact is meant to make problem-solving quicker and more transparent. Citizens can report many types of issues during the call. All complaints received during the programme will be entered into the Sahaaya 2.0 Portal. Residents can reach the Commissioner through 9480685705 or Landline: 080-22975936 / 080-23636671.

AAP unveils new committee ahead of B'luru municipal polls

BENGALURU

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) has announced a new Greater Bengaluru Area (GBA) Election Committee as part of its preparations for the upcoming municipal elections.

The announcement was made at a press conference led by State President Dr. Mukhyamantri Chandru. He said Bengaluru has suffered for five years without elected ward representatives because major political parties did not conduct municipal polls. According to him, the city's basic services have weakened during this long delay, and corruption in civic works has caused both financial loss and daily trouble for residents.

He said Bengaluru, once known around the world as the Silicon City, is now being called the "Garbage City" due to poor planning and misuse of public funds. He added that though media reports highlight new civic scams every day, no serious action has been taken to fix the situation. He urged citizens to demand responsible leadership in the next election.

National Joint Secretary Prithvi Reddy explained that AAP wants to rebuild the city with a clear vision based on honesty and accountability. He said Bengaluru must regain the dignity imagined by Kempegowda. The party promises world-class schools, good healthcare, and strong civic facilities for all if given a chance to serve. Working president Sitaram Gundappa said AAP already has active teams across many wards.

"Indira Kit' under PMGKY by next Jan: Muniyappa

NEW DELHI

Minister of Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs KH Muniyappa on Wednesday said a new ration kit in the name of 'Indira Gandhi' will be introduced under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana (PMGKY) under the name 'Indira Kit'.

Addressing th media, he said the kit will contain pulses, oil, salt and sugar. It will directly go to the family and these ingrediants are protein-rich, which is useful for the growth of children as well as others.

Muniyappa said the tender process and quality check are underway to implement this scheme by January or February next.

He expressed concern over the non-availability of maize for the Public Distribution System (PDS). "We are not getting enough maize and are trying to procure it," he said. Citing the example of people consuming more maize than rice in North Karnataka, he said a comprehensive plan is needed for production and storage.

Highlighting the issue of maize prices, especially 'Maldandi', the minister said, "The price of this maize is Rs 1,000 to 1,500 per quintal below the minimum support price (MSP). If its price is increased, farmers will be encouraged to supply to the government."

Saying he has appealed to the Chief Minister and the ministers of North Karnataka in this regard, Muniyappa said the state price fixing committee should consider the actual situation and take action.

CHRIST national conclave highlights social impact goals

BENGALURU

CHRIST (Deemed to be University) has launched the National Social Conclave 2025, a three-day forum focused on how social sciences can build a stronger and more inclusive nation.

The event, organised by the Centre for East Asian Studies and the School of Social Sciences, gathered policymakers, academics, industry experts, and students for meaningful discussions on social development.

The inaugural session was attended by former Karnataka Chief Secretary Dr. A. Ravindra, Bengaluru City Police Commissioner Seemant Kumar Singh, and CHRIST University Vice Chancellor Dr. Fr. Jose CC. Opening the event, Dr. N. Manoharan, Director of the Centre for East Asian Studies, said NSC '25 is the first conclave designed to create knowledge that brings hope, builds skills, and encourages purposeful action.

In his address, Commissioner Seemant Kumar Singh spoke about modern policing methods, especially how technology is helping the police handle rising cybercrime. He explained how issues such as traffic, environment, and public safety are closely linked, urging students to study these challenges and offer practical solutions. He added that knowledge, ethics, and empathy must guide the progress of future leaders.

Keynote speaker Dr. A. Ravindra highlighted challenges in healthcare, jobs, and poverty.

He called for social science education that focuses on equality and justice, along with stronger skills to help create a welfare-focused society.

Sanity restored: Missing youth safely found

BENGALURU

Sanjaynagar Police successfully traced and reunited a missing youth with his family. The complainant had reported on August 25 that his son, Manjunathan M, had left home and not returned. During the investigation, police discovered that he had purchased a new mobile SIM card in Hassan district using his Aadhaar card in November 2025. Acting on this lead, ASI P. Siddalingaswamy and PC Pinto M. Bhajantri traveled to Hassan, located Manjunathan, and safely brought him back to Sanjaynagar Police Station. He was then handed over to his grateful family, highlighting the police's prompt and effective response.

Outlet near Cubbon metro station opposed

BENGALURU

The Cubbon Park Walkers Association (CPWA) has strongly opposed the construction of a new retail outlet near the Cubbon Park Metro Station.

Members of the group said they will hold a major protest and also take all legal steps against the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL). They believe this commercial outlet goes against the peaceful nature of Cubbon Park and breaks the trust built through recent promises made by the government.

The Association said the new construction is a serious threat because it may open the door for many more commercial buildings inside or around the park. For years, the CPWA has been fighting against the growing concrete structures that they say are slowly changing the character of the city's important green space. They have already filed a Public Interest Litigation demanding the removal of earlier commercial structures. CPWA President S. Umesh said the actions of BMRCL completely ignore the concerns of citizens. He added that this step places business interests above the need to protect nature and the health of thousands of people who use the park daily.

The walkers also pointed out that Deputy Chief Minister D. K. Shivakumar had clearly promised during a recent visit that no new concrete buildings would be allowed inside Cubbon Park.

PILGRIMAGE ALERT

Brain fever: K'taka issues advisory to Sabarimala pilgrims

BENGALURU

The Karnataka Health Ministry has issued an important safety advisory for pilgrims heading to Sabarimala, following reports of a rare brain infection in Kerala. The disease is caused by a deadly amoeba called Naegleria fowleri, which can trigger amoebic meningoencephalitis, a serious and often fatal condition.

The Commissionerate of Health and Family Welfare Services has urged devotees to be careful and take necessary precautions during the pilgrimage. Naegleria fowleri lives mainly in warm freshwater and soil, including ponds, lakes, standing water, and swimming pools. The infection does not spread from person to person or through drinking contaminated water.

The amoeba enters the body through the nose during contact with water, then travels to the brain, causing severe symptoms. Pilgrims are advised to use nose clips or tightly close their noses while bathing in stagnant water.

Signs of infection can appear within seven days and include fever, intense headache, nausea, vomiting, neck stiffness, confusion, mental changes, and behavioral disorders. Anyone experiencing these symptoms should immediately contact the nearest government hospital or doctor for urgent care.

Authorities stressed that vigilance and simple preventive measures can significantly reduce the risk of infection. Pilgrims and their families are encouraged to follow these safety tips carefully to ensure a safe pilgrimage.

QUICK READ

Anjukumari J. Vanti awarded PhD

Kalaburagi

The Visvesvaraya Technological University (VTU), Belagavi, has awarded a PhD degree to Anjukumari J. Vanti, a resident of Bharat Nagar, Kalaburagi, for her research thesis titled "A New Method to Develop a Cooling System for Modern Houses in the Hot and Dry Climate of Kalaburagi." Her research work was guided by Dr. Vimala Swamy, Principal of the Architecture Department at Gopalan College, Bengaluru. Anjukumari is currently working as an Associate Professor at PDI Engineering College, Kalaburagi.

Two Electricity Bills for the Same House: JESCO Mistake

Raichur

A woman has been left distressed after receiving two electricity bills for the same house, in an incident that occurred in Kadangadoddi village of Raichur taluk. In the village, Bhagyamma, a farmer who owns her own house, has alleged that she is being pressured to pay a bill that does not belong to her. Every month, Bhagyamma's family normally pays between ₹150 and ₹350 as their electricity bill. This month too, their regular bill amounted to ₹172. However, along with it, they received another bill with a different RR number, demanding payment of ₹10,105. It is alleged that staff members warned her that the power supply would be disconnected if she failed to pay the amount. "Show me the meter and the house corresponding to the RR number on that bill.

Nayana in Trouble: Caste Discrimination Case Filed Over Remarks

Kalaburagi

An FIR has been registered in Kalaburagi against small-screen actress Nayana, who rose to fame through the Comedy Kiladi show. A case has been filed under the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act at the Sub-Urban Police Station. Nayana is accused of using a caste-insulting, prohibited term referring to a particular community during a public event organized by Manimithra Company. Dalit Sena Kalaburagi District President Manjunath Bhandari lodged the complaint at the Sub-Urban Police Station and has demanded a thorough investigation. The information was confirmed on Wednesday around 3 PM.

Anubhava Mantapa: The First Model of Democratic System

Celebrating Vachanas, Spiritual Heritage, and Community Engagement

BIDAR

Gurubasava Pattadevaru of Bhalki Hirematt emphasized that the Anubhava Mantapa stands as the first model of a democratic system. He made these remarks while attending the Lingayat Mahamatha program at Gorata (B) village in Hulsur taluk, held to promote the upcoming Anubhava Mantapa Utsava and Sharan Kammata program in Basavakalyan.

He stated, "The mortal world is the Creator's workshop, and this is God's kingdom. Everyone here has equal rights. Share the kingdom with your community; this ensures equal authority for all. Basavanna established the Anubhava Mantapa in Kalyan to provide equal opportunities and guide people toward righteous living."

Pattadevaru highlighted the Mantapa's significance among Basavanna's notable works. "It was a historic milestone for humanity. Entry was open to all, and free thinking was encouraged. There were no distinctions between men and women, rich and poor, high and low castes, or different occupations. Householders and ascetics were treated equally. The focus was on individual and societal welfare through spiritual enlightenment," he explained.

He added that Basavanna built this Mantapa, and the land of Basavakalyan remains sacred. The Utsava and Sharan Kammata programs, guided by President Pujya Basavalinga Pattadevar, aim to revive Basavanna's teachings. The celebrations include daily Vachana recitations, a cycle rally, lectures, and Vachana recitation competitions, attracting devotees, spiritual leaders, and political dignitaries from across the state. Gorata village Sharan communities were also invited.

Speaking at the event, Peethadhipathi Prabhudev Swamiji of Gorata (B) Lingayat Mahamatha said, "People thronged the Mantapa like bees to a honeycomb. It gathered the saints' wisdom in honey-like Vachanas for the welfare of the world. The first grand assembly of 300 Vachanakars and 36 Vachanakartis performing miraculous works has no parallel even today. Such glory should be revived in Basavakalyan, and the Utsava celebrated with the zeal of a Lingayat festival, with everyone participating enthusiastically."

The program was presided over by village elders Channabasappa Patange. Other dignitaries included Baburao Rajole, Shivputrappa Kanjje, Subhash Patange, Chandrakant Kanjje, Basavaraj Police Patil, Bharatataraj Police Patil, Ravi Kadepure, Bharatataraj Patange, and Basavaraj Mashette. Lingayat Sevadal President Supreet Patange welcomed the gathering, Vijayalakshmi Rajole offered the vote of thanks, and Prajwal Rajole anchored the event.

"Plant a tree in the name of your loved ones," says RTO

Air Pollution Awareness Month: Residents Encouraged to Plant Trees and Take Action Against Vehicle Pollution.

BIDAR

"Humans can survive without food or water for a time, but not even a minute without air. Everyone should plant a sapling at home in the name of their most beloved family member," said Regional Transport Officer G.K. Biradar.

He was speaking at the inauguration of the Air Pollution Awareness Month program held at the Transport Office conference hall in Pratapnagar, organized jointly by the RTO office, Motor Vehicle Training School, school associations, and Bidar Public Works Services Association.

Biradar urged every vehicle owner to plant at least 10 saplings annually and stressed the health risks of vehicle pollution, including cough, asthma, kidney, and heart problems. He highlighted the importance of pollution checks every six months, warning fines of ₹1,500 for two-wheelers and ₹3,000 for four-wheelers for non-compliance. He also advised avoiding vehicle use for minor errands and encouraged planting saplings in the name of elders, friends, or loved ones.

Motor Vehicle Inspector Ananthuram emphasized that saplings must be cared for and nurtured, as they provide flowers, fruits, and clean air. Inspector M.S. Subhash advised timely engine servicing, including carbon cleaning and oil changes, to reduce pollution. Shivaraj Jamadar, State Organizing Secretary of the Motor Vehicle Training School, urged increased use of electric and CNG vehicles over petrol and diesel vehicles.

During the event, citizens visiting for permanent driving licenses, vehicle renewals, and other services were given free saplings by the transport department.

Other dignitaries on the stage included Office Supervisor Mallikarjun M., Motor Driving School President Prakash Gumme, Secretary Rajkumar Biradar, Public Works Association President Saiyad Maksud Ali, Vice President Yeshappa Chitta, and student Shrikant. The event's welcome was delivered by Kanteppa Gupta, proceedings anchored by Umesh Unde, and Pandit K. Veeranna gave the vote of thanks.

Worm-Infested Rice and Dal Served in School Mid-Day Meals

YADGIR

Shocking revelations have emerged regarding the quality of mid-day meals provided to students in government schools across Yadgir district. Despite the government allocating crores of rupees to ensure nutritious meals under the Akshara Dasoha scheme for students in government and aided schools, officials have failed to guarantee the quality of the food grains supplied. At the Government Higher Primary School in Mundaragi village of Yadgir taluk, meals are prepared daily for 631 children. However, investigations revealed that the rice supplied to the school was infested with worms, the wheat was spoiled and crawling with insects, and even the toor dal was of substandard quality, contaminated with dust. These findings indicate that food grains unfit even for cattle are being provided to children, posing serious health risks.

DC Shilpa Orders Immediate Action on Stray Dog Control

BIDAR

In the wake of the recent Supreme Court directive on controlling stray dog populations, District Commissioner Shilpa Sharma has urged urban and rural local bodies, along with relevant department officials, to act promptly.

Speaking at a meeting held today in the district commissioner's office, Shilpa Sharma instructed local bodies to submit a list of the number of dogs in urban and rural areas, along with the shelters provided for them, by November 21.

According to the 2019 livestock census by the Animal Husbandry Department, Bidar district had 7,000 stray dogs, a number that has reportedly increased since. Officials were asked to provide current figures of stray dogs in their respective areas.

The District Commissioner emphasized that 15 concerned departments must take responsibility for implementing measures to control stray dog populations, with city municipal corporations and gram panchayats playing a key role.

Key directives included constructing boundary walls around public buildings, preventing stray dogs from entering bus stands, and ensuring no food waste is discarded in public areas. The education department is tasked with raising awareness among students about steps to take in case of dog bites, while the health department must ensure mandatory rabies vaccination and immunoglobulin administration wherever needed.

Speaking at the meeting, B. Narasappa, Deputy Director of the Animal Husbandry Department, said that sterilization surgeries for all stray dogs should be completed within eight weeks, after which the animals should be relocated to designated shelters and vaccinated against rabies. The Goralli area in Bidar Municipal Corporation has been identified as a shelter location.

The meeting, chaired by the District Commissioner, included participation from the Chief Executive Officer of Zilla Panchayat, Senior Superintendent of Police, District Health and Family Welfare Officer, Municipal Commissioner, Public Works Department officials, National Highway Project Directors, DDPI, DDPH, Registrar of Veterinary College, Registrar of Bidar University, District Surgeons, RTO, Deputy Director of Sports, KSRTC Control Officer, and Deputy Director of Animal Husbandry Department, among others. Mukul Jain, Municipal Commissioner, and several other officials were also present.

Only Socialism Can Solve Today's Problems, Says Mane

KALABURAGI

The capitalist governments of the country, wearing the mask of democracy, have opened up full freedom for a handful of wealthy people to loot the workers and the nation's resources. Such governments must be overthrown, and workers must unite to establish socialist governments through revolution in order to free the nation from its burning problems, said Comrade Ganapatarav K. Mane, Secretary of the local committee of the SUCI(C) party.

He spoke after celebrating the 108th anniversary of the Russian November Revolution at the SUCI(I) party office in Shahabad town.

Due to the excessive greed for wealth shown by imperialists and capitalists, the country's farmers and working class are trapped in severe hardship. Those who create wealth—the farmers and workers—have become destitute. The great Russian Revolution of 1917 continues to inspire this struggle, he said.

In Russia, then one of the most disease-stricken and oppressed countries in the world, Comrade Lenin organized the exploited workers on the basis of communist ideology, built mass struggles against the cruel Tsarist monarchy, and in November 1917 successfully carried out the socialist revolution. After the revolution, Lenin and Stalin, who led Russia (which became the USSR), effectively implemented the socialist system and achieved progress in all sectors. They uprooted poverty, unemployment, price rise, illiteracy, prostitution, and many such problems, creating an egalitarian society. The dream of such an equal society, envisioned in India by Bhagat Singh and Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, remains unfulfilled even today. All the parties that have ruled the country so far have served the capitalists, leaving the problems of the common people unresolved. Therefore, he said, the system must be overthrown through a people's movement and a socialist, egalitarian system must be established.

District committee member Ramanna S. Ibrahimpur also spoke. SUCI(C) leader Nilakanth M. Huli presided over the program.

CYBERCRIME TRAINING EMPHASIZED IN POLICE TRAINING – ALOK KUMAR

KALABURAGI

During police sub-inspector and constable training, Karnataka State Police Director (Training Division) Alok Kumar emphasized the importance of cybercrime prevention along with physical and mental stress management and adherence to law.

On November 19, at the Naganahalli Police Training College, he addressed 380 newly recruited PSIs during their foundational training. He highlighted that only officers who receive proper training can effectively perform their duties. He stressed that upholding human values while executing responsibilities enhances training outcomes and benefits the local jurisdiction.

In today's digital era, cybercrimes are increasing rapidly. Therefore, the training covers cybercrime, cybersecurity, cyber forensics, and legal procedures through national and international experts via lectures and practical sessions. This equips officers to handle cybercrime efficiently, unlike traditional theft or robbery cases where evidence and justice are comparatively easier to establish.

Alok Kumar also stressed the need for vigilance and timely action in cybercrime cases, comparing it to the "Golden Hour" principle in medical emergencies, ensuring swift response.

Five-Year Service Monitoring

The training curriculum has been revised to include various practical modules. Officers completing training will be monitored for five years to ensure adherence to legal procedures, public-friendly policing, human values, and social service ethics.

Bandh Highlights Public Demand for Upgrade

HULSOOR

Hulsoor witnessed a successful town bandh as residents and leaders pressed for the elevation of the town panchayat to a higher administrative status. The bandh, organized under the leadership of Sri Dr. Shivananda Swamiji, saw widespread participation from shopkeepers, youths, gram panchayat members, and political leaders across various parties. Many shop owners voluntarily closed their establishments, and streets across the town appeared largely empty, signaling strong public support for the cause.

JDS Silver Jubilee: Bidar Leaders Urged to Join

BIDAR

On the occasion of the Janata Dal (Secular) party's 25th anniversary, the JDS central office at J.P. Bhavan in Bengaluru is organizing Silver Jubilee celebrations and a series of programs on November 21 and 22. Ramesh Patil Solapur, JDS District President of Bidar, has urged party leaders and elected representatives from the district to attend in large numbers.

Speaking on Wednesday about the upcoming Silver Jubilee, he said that on November 21 (Friday), a flag-hoisting ceremony will mark the beginning of the celebrations, followed by several meetings. The main Silver Jubilee event will take place on November 22 (Saturday), along with additional meetings and activities. The two-day celebrations will be held under the leadership of H.D. Deve Gowda, National President of JDS, H.D. Kumaraswamy, State President of JDS, and other senior national and state-level party leaders. Leaders from across Karnataka and other parts of the country are expected to participate.

GOVERNMENT ORDER STAYED

Stone-Pelting Case: HC Stays State Govt's Withdrawal Order

KALABURAGI

The High Court on Monday issued a stay on the state government's order to withdraw the case against the accused involved in the police stone-pelting incident and jeep torching that occurred in Chittapur, linked to illegal cattle transport.

The incident had taken place in Chittapur in August 2019. Several serious charges were filed against multiple accused in the case. That year, Minister Priyank Kharge had brought the issue to the attention of the state assembly regarding the withdrawal of the case. The matter had also received a legal opinion from the state government, which stated, "There is strong evidence of a serious offense against the accused; the case is not eligible for withdrawal." Nevertheless, the government decided to withdraw the case. Subsequently, government lawyers filed a petition under Section 321 of the CrPC in the Chittapur court, which had quashed the case, according to sources.

Challenging the state government's order to withdraw the case, M.B. Girish Bharadwaj from Bengaluru filed a criminal review petition in the High Court. The single-judge bench of Karnataka High Court, Kalaburagi bench, headed by Justice Sachin Shankar Magadum, took up the petition for hearing on November 14.

During the hearing on November 18 (Monday), the court stayed the state government's order. The next hearing was scheduled for December 4.

Yashas S. Dikshit appeared as counsel for the petitioner, while H.G.P. Gopiyadav represented the state government.

QUICK READ

Sports and cultural competitions for differently-abled

Chitradurga

As part of the district-level celebrations for World Disabled Day on December 3, a special sports and cultural event for differently-abled individuals will be held on November 25 at 10 a.m. at the Onake Obavva District Stadium. Sports events for visually impaired participants above 18 years include shot put and cane race. Hearing-impaired and physically challenged participants can compete in 100m sprint, shot put, and javelin throw. Intellectually challenged participants have 100m sprint, ring toss into buckets, and musical chair events. Cultural competitions include folk songs, emotional songs, and devotional singing for all differently-abled participants above 18 years. District Disabled Welfare Officer J. Vaishali has urged all differently-abled individuals to participate in large numbers to make the event a success.

Two arrested for attempted murder with sword

Hiriadka

Hiriadka police have arrested two men in connection with a brutal attack on a biker using a sword. The accused have been identified as Manjunanda Hegde (49) of Kanjaru Parari and Jagadish Hegde (48) of Koppala. Police have also seized the iron rod used in the assault. Both were produced before court and remanded to judicial custody. The incident occurred on the night of November 15 when Shivraj was returning home on his bike after work. At Koppala in Kanjaru village, Manjunanda allegedly blocked his path, struck him on the head with a sword, and attempted to kill him. Shivraj fell from the bike and was assaulted again. The complaint states that 7–8 others, including Jayananda and Chandrahas Hegde, also tried to attack him. Under PSI Puneeth Kumar's leadership, police arrested Jagadish on November 17. Manjunanda, who had admitted himself to Ajjarkad District Hospital after the attack, was arrested on November 18 following his discharge.

KOLAR DISTRICT WINS NATIONAL AWARD FOR WATER CONSERVATION

Kolar district has achieved national recognition for its exceptional water conservation efforts under JSJB

KOLAR

Kolar district has earned a prestigious national award under the Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari (JSJB) Abhiyan for its remarkable work in water conservation and natural resource protection. The district's efforts—ranging from rejuvenating hundreds of lakes to developing major feeder canals—have significantly boosted groundwater levels and improved irrigation facilities. Along with the award, Kolar has also received a cash prize of ₹25 lakh, making it the top-performing district in the Bengaluru division.

A central inspection team visited multiple villages across Mulbagal, Srinivaspura, Malur, Kolar, and Bangarpet taluks to review works carried out under MGNREGA, Jal Jeevan Mission, Atal Bhujal Yojana, and forestry, agriculture, and horticulture departments. Their report highlighted Kolar's outstanding execution of water conservation initiatives.

Between April 2024 and March 2025, Kolar completed around 8,470 water-related works and uploaded details on the Jal Sanchay portal. These projects included bund construction, recharge pits, soak pits, lake development, tank strengthening, Kalyani restoration, rainwater harvesting structures, open well desilting, nala deepening, and check-dam construction. These interventions played a crucial role in improving groundwater and providing reliable water for agriculture in a district that has no major rivers.

Under the JSJB campaign, five zones were evaluated. In Zone 3—comprising Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu—seven Karnataka districts received national recognition. Among them, Kolar secured the first place in the Bengaluru division.

The district's success reflects the spirit of the campaign's motto: "Unite for water, conserve every drop." By strengthening community participation, promoting water awareness, and building sustainable conservation structures, Kolar has demonstrated an impactful model for addressing water scarcity and improving climate resilience.

Roads, water supply, and civic services in crisis: Fmr MLA

SHIVAMOGGA

The city is witnessing a severe stagnation in development, with roads riddled with potholes and round-the-clock water supply failing to meet basic needs. Former MLA and JDS State Vice President K.B. Prasannakumar has accused the district administration and municipal authorities of failing entirely in providing essential civic infrastructure.

Speaking at a press conference, he pointed out that while district ministers recently inaugurated projects worth ₹700 crore in Soraba, Shivamogga city faces critical issues that remain unaddressed. According to him, officials at the DC office, AC office, and municipal staff are prioritizing personal matters over public service, delaying file processing and neglecting citizen grievances.

Prasannakumar also criticized District In-charge Minister Madhu Bangarappa, son of former Chief Minister Bangarappa, for ignoring major urban concerns. On Airport Road, streetlights remain non-functional at night, and

Shivamogga faces severe civic neglect with pothole-ridden roads, irregular water supply, and malfunctioning streetlights, says former MLA K.B. Prasannakumar

numerous neighborhoods and main roads are similarly affected. Despite promises of 24/7 water supply, residents now receive water for barely an hour daily.

Potholes caused by city authorities remain unrepaired, and roads meant for development have deteriorated further. Citizens' contributions could have funded proper road surfacing, yet no work has been undertaken over the past two-and-a-half years.

The situation with underground drainage (UGD) and box drains is also critical. Law and order has deteriorated, with rising instances of rowdiness, drug use, and general lawlessness. Traffic police focus excessively on issuing fines to ordinary citizens while failing to apprehend actual offenders.

Prasannakumar urged ministers and the Chief Minister to intervene immediately, allocate necessary funds, and restore the city's infrastructure. JDS leaders, including Deepak Singh, H.M. Sangayya, Shyam, Gandhadamane Narasimha, Bommanakatte Manjunath, Ramesh Nayak, and Vijaykumar, were present at the event.

Min meets Director of Sugarcane and Oilseeds Directorate

BAGALKOT

RB Timmappur, Minister of Excise and Bagalkot district in charge met Aravind Kumar Rawat, Director of the Sugarcane and Oilseeds Directorate under the central government's Department of Food and Public Distribution, at Krishi Bhavan in Delhi. The discussion focused on the pressing challenges faced by sugarcane farmers in Karnataka, particularly in Mudhol taluk of Bagalkote district.

During the meeting, Minister Timmappur highlighted multiple issues affecting sugarcane growers, including the persistent decline in sugarcane prices, delayed repayments from sugar mills, insufficient increases in the Minimum Support Price (MSP/FRP), and uncertainties caused by changes in export policies.

He emphasized that thousands of farmers in northern Karnataka rely heavily on sugarcane cultivation for their livelihood, yet they are currently deprived of timely justice and support.

The minister urged central authorities to take immediate steps to safeguard farmers' interests. He pressed for a rational increase in FRP, stability in sugar export policies, expedited central assistance to state sugar mills, and prompt settlement of pending dues owed to farmers. Director Aravind Kumar Rawat assured that the issues raised by the minister would be taken seriously and discussed at the highest levels of the central government, with appropriate action expected soon.

The meeting was also attended by Mudhol Block Congress President Sadugouda Patil and Bagalkote District Kisan Congress Unit President Anand Hatti, highlighting a collaborative effort to bring farmers' concerns to the forefront and ensure timely intervention by the authorities.

Approval granted to implement PM Fasal Bima Yojana

MANDYA

The Karnataka Raitha Suraksha–Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana has been approved for implementation in Mandya district for the 2025–26 kharif and summer seasons. Key crops have been notified at the gram panchayat and hobli levels for farmers to register for crop insurance.

At the gram panchayat level, farmers in Maddur, Mandya, Nagamangala, Pandavapura and Srirangapatna taluks can insure rainfed horse gram during the kharif season. For the summer season, irrigated paddy can be insured in notified panchayats of Mandya, Pandavapura and Srirangapatna.

At the hobli level, farmers in notified hoblis of Mandya, Maddur, Malavalli, Pandavapura, KR Pete and Nagamangala may insure irrigated ragi and rainfed horse gram. In Pandavapura's Chinakuruli, Melukote and Kasaba hoblis, tomato growers can register.

Protest over abusive language use by teacher

CHIKKABALLAPUR

In a serious incident at the Government High School in Doddaganjuru village, Chintamani Taluk, Chikkaballapur district, girl students protested against their headmaster for using abusive and inappropriate language towards them. The students alleged that the headmaster made offensive remarks, prompting them to stage a demonstration outside the school.

According to reports, the students boycotted classes and blocked the road in front of the school, expressing their anger with slogans such as "We don't want such a teacher." Parents of the students also joined the protest. The students accused the headmaster, identified as Obayya, of making indecent comments when they requested leave, including inappropriate remarks about where they were going or who they were meeting. They further alleged that the headmaster made lewd comments related to their movements, personal privacy, and use of school facilities.

When the issue came to light, Block Education Officer (BEO) Umadevi visited the school to assess the situation. The students reportedly expressed their grievances directly to her, some even shedding tears and falling at her feet to emphasize the seriousness of the matter.

In response to the protest, the Deputy Director of Public Instruction (DDPI) instructed that the headmaster be placed on compulsory leave immediately. Senior education officials have been informed, and the department has assured that appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against the teacher in accordance with established protocols.

Shabarimala pilgrims advised to take precautions

CHITRADURGA

Following reports of cases of Amoebic Meningoencephalitis caused by Naegleria fowleri in Kerala, the Health and Family Welfare Department has issued safety guidelines for pilgrims traveling to Shabarimala.

Naegleria fowleri is a free-living, highly virulent amoeba commonly found in warm freshwater sources, including stagnant water, ponds, swimming pools, and lakes. The infection is not transmitted from person to person or by drinking contaminated water. However, if contaminated water enters the nose, the amoeba can reach the brain, causing a rare but fatal condition called Amoebic Meningoencephalitis.

Pilgrims are advised to take necessary precautions while bathing in natural water bodies. Using nose clips or tightly pinching the nose to prevent water entry is recommended.

Symptoms may appear within seven days of exposure and include fever, severe headache, nausea, vomiting, neck stiffness.

Akrama–Sakrama: Over 250 applications pending for clearance due to legal hurdles

KARKALA

In Hebri taluk, more than 250 applications submitted under the Akrama–Sakrama scheme remain unresolved due to legal and departmental hurdles. The Hebri Gopal Bhandari Abhimanigala Vedike and the Social Service Trust of Hebri–Karkala have urged authorities to conduct a joint survey in Hebri and Nadpalu villages so that long-pending land title deeds can be issued to eligible residents. Trust president Neere Krishna Shetty stated that many families cultivating these lands for decades are unable to obtain title deeds due to disputes between the Forest and Revenue Departments. The organisations plan to submit a formal petition to the Hebri Tahsildar and the Forest Department seeking immediate action.

In Nadpalu alone, over 150 applications—Forms 50, 53, and 57—have been filed, while Hebri village has over 100 similar cases. Shetty appealed to the government to order a joint survey and issue title deeds to the rightful beneficiaries. He further pointed out that the Chief Secretary of Karnataka has already instructed the Revenue Department to forward proposals to the Forest Department whenever discrepancies arise in survey boundaries adjoining forest land.

MP Raghavendra inaugurates cancer awareness center

SHIKARIPUR

Highlighting the importance of public awareness on cancer, Shivamogga MP B.Y. Raghavendra inaugurated a Cancer Information Center in Shikaripur, established by the Sanjeevini Cancer Service Trust, an initiative of M.I.O. NGO. Speaking at the event, he praised the trust's efforts, stating that cancer remains a deadly disease claiming numerous lives across the country, but preventive measures can significantly reduce its impact.

Raghavendra emphasized that the newly launched center provides crucial guidance on early detection and preventive methods, a rare and commendable initiative. He also highlighted the central government's Ayushman Bharat scheme, which offers free treatment up to ₹5 lakh, and stressed that such awareness centers are vital to complement government healthcare programs.

He called for wider outreach, encouraging the trust to expand similar centers across all taluks, assuring full support from his office. As part of the initiative, the trust launched a campaign to reach one lakh people with 12 key questions on cancer awareness.

Shikaripur Municipal Council President Sudhamanju underlined the need for youth-oriented awareness programs in schools and colleges. Girish, president of Shaurya Foundation, said they are coordinating with M.I.O. Hospital for a local cancer awareness campaign. R. Nanjundi, Project Officer of Shri Kshetra Dharmasthala, pledged institutional support for public awareness initiatives.

Dr. Divyajyoti briefed attendees on cancer symptoms, while Jyothi hosted the program. The event also saw participation from Dilip Nadig, V.H.A.I. Manjunath, A.N. Vijayendra Rao, NCC students of Sahyadri Science College, and students from Bapuji Ayurvedic Medical College, Shivamogga. Dr. D. Suresh, president of Sanjeevini Trust, explained the operational procedures of the Cancer Information Center.

LAD CRITICIZES PM

Never seen a PM win election through fraud, says Minister Santosh Lad

HUBBALLI

Minister Santosh Lad has strongly criticized the Prime Minister, stating that "a leader winning an election through deception has never been seen before." He alleged that the BJP secured victory in the Bihar elections through manipulative tactics.

Speaking to reporters, Lad questioned the Prime Minister's priorities during the Bihar polls. "There was a bomb blast in Delhi. The Prime Minister could have returned immediately following the incident. Instead, he chose to attend the King of Bhutan's birthday celebrations," he remarked, highlighting what he saw as a lack of urgency and responsibility.

Lad also accused the Election Commission of acting in favor of the BJP. According to him, the Mahagathbandhan had a clear lead in postal ballots, but the EVM results favored the NDA. He cited election statistics from Delhi's Gole Market as evidence of irregularities, asserting that the outcome did not reflect the actual voter trend.

Apart from national political concerns, Lad said he has raised multiple regional issues, including sugarcane-related problems, with the Prime Minister. Chief Ministers have presented five key demands, and the response from the central government is being closely observed.

On administrative matters, Lad noted that decisions regarding leadership changes are made by the party high command. He emphasized that winter sessions of the state assembly are convened specifically to address issues affecting North Karnataka. He credited the Congress party with dedicating significant time in the assembly to discuss local problems and pledged that similar attention will continue in the upcoming winter session to ensure the region's concerns are addressed effectively.

STATE TO MARK 50 YEARS OF ANGANWADI SERVICES

Karnataka celebrates 50 years of Anganwadi services with Hebbalkar launching ICDS Golden Jubilee, Akka Pade, Gruhalakshmi Bank

RAMANAGARA

In celebration of 50 years of Anganwadi services in Karnataka, the Women and Child Development Minister, Lakshmi Hebbalkar, announced that a landmark event will be held on November 28 at Bangalore Palace Grounds. During the program, three major initiatives will be launched, making it a historic occasion.

Speaking at a preparatory meeting for the South Bangalore district, Hebbalkar highlighted the significance of the ICDS Golden Jubilee, the launch of the Akka Pade scheme, and the inauguration of the Gruhalakshmi Bank. She called on Anganwadi workers and assistants to participate actively to ensure the event's success.

Hebbalkar emphasized that Congress, the party that led India to independence, has consistently implemented women-centric programs, describing it as a "guarantee government." She recalled that Indira Gandhi initiated Anganwadis in 1975 in Mysore district to provide nutritional food and education to children living in poverty. Now, after 50 years, the program continues with expanded initiatives, including early education from LKG to UKG and the formation of Gruhalakshmi Multi-Purpose Cooperative Societies under the Gruhalakshmi scheme.

The minister expressed confidence that the Congress government, under Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy CM D.K. Shivakumar, would continue its five-guarantee programs and remain in power through 2028. She criticized BJP for copying the Gruhalakshmi model in Maharashtra but diluting benefits post-election.

Hebbalkar also highlighted the recent increase in honorarium for Anganwadi workers and assistants and promised further increments. She urged that at least 2.5 lakh beneficiaries in South Bangalore be enrolled as shareholders of the Gruhalakshmi cooperative, ensuring the success of the Gruhalakshmi Bank, which aims to reach households directly.

The preparatory meeting was attended by Ramanagara MLA Iqbal Hussain, MLC S. Ravi, officials of various district and state development authorities, and senior officers from the Women and Child Development Department.

Free skill training for Yuvanidhi beneficiaries

CHITRADURGA

The District Commissioner, T. Venkatesh, has urged all Yuvanidhi beneficiaries in the district to avail themselves of free skill training under the Yuvanidhi Plus program. Unemployed youth receiving Yuvanidhi allowance can directly contact nearby government training institutes, including ITI, GTTC, and CIDAC centers, to enroll for various skill development courses.

Beneficiaries are advised to register at their respective taluk-based training centers with their personal details by November 24 to participate in the free programs. The initiative aims to empower unemployed youth with practical skills, enhancing their employability and supporting their professional growth.

Pulse Polio vaccination drive in dist on Dec 21: DC

CHIKKABALLAPURA

District Commissioner P.N. Ravindra announced that a Pulse Polio vaccination drive will be held on December 21 for all children aged 0–5 years across the district, regardless of previous vaccination status.

Speaking after chairing the District Task Force meeting on MR Elimination, Routine Immunization, and Pulse Polio programme at the DC's conference hall on Wednesday, he said the target is to administer polio drops to approximately 1.22 lakh children below five years.

With the cooperation of Health, Women & Child Development, and other departments, every child in this age group will be covered. Special teams will visit booths on Dec 21, and on Dec 22–23, vaccination teams will go door-to-door, visit bus stands, crowded markets, and transit points to ensure no child is missed.

Measles-Rubella (MR) Vaccination

The second dose of MR vaccine (given between 16–24 months) provides 95% lifelong protection against measles and rubella. Parents must ensure children receive both doses on schedule and cooperate with health workers.

Dengue Awareness

Stagnant water around homes is the main reason dengue spreads. The disease is caused by the dengue virus transmitted through infected Aedes aegypti mosquitoes that breed in clean stagnant water in drums, barrels, cement tanks, pots, coconut shells, discarded bottles, and tyres. These mosquitoes bite during the daytime.

Symptoms include sudden high fever, severe headache, pain behind the eyes, severe joint and muscle pain, nausea, rashes, and bleeding from nose/gums or under the skin. There is no specific medicine or vaccine for dengue. Immediate medical attention from experts and treatment at the nearest government hospital is essential if symptoms appear.

District Health & Family Welfare Officer Dr. Mahesh Kumar, Deputy Director of Women & Child Development Department Venkatesh D., District AYUSH Officer Tabu Bhanu, taluk health officers, and other officials were present.

Navodaya entrance exam admit cards available for download

CHIKKABALLAPUR

In Chikkaballapur district, students appearing for the Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya Selection Test for admission to Class 6 can now download their admit cards. The exam is being conducted for eligible students studying in Class 5 during the current academic year in schools under Chintamani taluk. Parents and students can visit the official website — https://cbseitms.rcil.gov.in/nvs/AdminCard/AdminCard — and use the provided link to download the admit card.

PM Shri Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya authorities informed in a press release that admit cards must be downloaded and carried to the examination centre.

Training essential to improve children's learning quality: BEO

CHITRADURGA

To bring qualitative improvement in children's learning, teacher training is essential, said Block Education Officer H. Girija. She was speaking at the two-day in-service training programme organised for teachers of Classes 3 to 5 at the DIET Field Resource Centre in the city. The training focused on Odu Karnataka, Mathematics–Ganak, and value education. Girija said the Department of Education has been implementing several initiatives to strengthen both curricular and co-curricular learning. Training helps teachers adopt effective strategies during classroom teaching and enhances children's learning outcomes. She emphasised that innovative teaching activities must be introduced to make learning more engaging, and teachers should implement the training inputs at the school level. This academic year, she urged teachers to ensure 100% progress under the Odu Karnataka programme. BRC Sampath Kumar, delivering the introductory address, said teachers must first develop strong values within themselves and then inculcate these values in students through value education, helping them become responsible citizens. The Odu Karnataka programme covers 60 teaching days, aiming to strengthen early language skills. The Mathematics–Ganak programme runs in two phases over six weeks, while value education must be integrated at all stages to nurture good behaviour and ethics among children. He added that punctuality, professionalism, and coordination among teachers can greatly improve performance at all levels. Proper planning and activity-based learning at the school level can significantly strengthen children's learning.

CRP Mallika offered the prayer. Timmaraju welcomed the gathering. Varalakshmi delivered the vote of thanks, and BRP Vidya conducted the programme. A total of 204 teachers from various government schools across Chitradurga taluk participated in the workshop.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **YESAPPA** #737 Ashreyanagar, bhind SRS Compound, Peenya 1st Stage, Bangalore - 58 have changed my name **RAJU D** vide affidavit date 19-11-2025 before notary Prabhakar Bangalore - 560009.

NAME CHANGE

I, **ALMAS ASHFAQ SHAIKH**, W/o. Azghar A, Resident of No, 114, Islampura Main Road Nelamangala Bengaluru Rural Dist, 562123, have changed my name to **ALMAS SHAIKH**, vide affidavit dated: 18.11.2025 before notary B.A. LAKSHMINARAYANA RAO, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **MARIYAMMA**, Venkatapur Jagir, Raichur - 584134 have changed my name **LAXMI** vide affidavit date 19-11-2025 before notary A Prabhakar Bangalore - 560009.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **RAMESH** #89 Main Road near Durgamma Gudi, Itagi, Raichur - 584126. Have changed my name **DURAGAPPA** vide affidavit date 19-11-2025, before notary T C Thiammaraja Bangalore - 560009.

यूनियन बैंक Union Bank of India
Banashankari 3rd Stage Branch
No.569 Shanthi Arcade, 2nd Main Hosakerehalli Main Road, 2nd Phase, 6th Block, BSK 3rd Stage Bengaluru-560085.
Mail ID: ubin0815829@unionbankofindia.bank, Mobile: 9321415821

CORRIGENDUM

This is to inform you that the Auction Notice for the sale of the vehicle of Borrower Mr. Sathish Handa, S/o Nagu Handa, published in the newspaper on 16.11.2025, had the auction date incorrectly mentioned as 14.03.2025.Therefore, the correct auction date may be read as 24.11.2025.
There are no other changes.

Date : 19.11.2025
Place: Bangalore
Sd/- Authorised Officer
Union Bank of India

केनरा बैंक Canara Bank
(A Government of India Undertaking)
Ganganagar Branch,
No.1/1, KHM Block, Opp. Main Post Office, R T Nagar, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560032

GOLD JEWEL AUCTION NOTICE

Whereas the authorized officer of **CANARA BANK, GANGANAGAR BRANCH** issued Sale notice(s) calling upon the borrower to clear the dues in gold loan availed by them. The borrower had failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned will conduct auction of the gold ornaments strictly on **"As is What is Basis" & "Whatever there is Basis" & "Without recourse Basis".** The auction will be conducted ONLINE on **28.11.2025**

Name of the Borrower & Branch	Account No	Gross weight (in gms)	Net Weight (in gms)	Date of Inspection & EMD	A/c Status
MD Saleem S/o Mayin Kunjila Village, Kunjila Post, Napoklu Madikeri, Kodagu-571214 **Ganganagar Branch**	164043 585311	5.7 Grams	5.1 Grams	25.11.2025 & Rs. 25,000/-	SUB STND

Please contact /visit Branch for further information

Date : 19.11.2025
Place : Bangalore
Sd/- Authorised Officer, Canara Bank

KARNATAKA HOUSING BOARD
3rd & 4th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bengaluru-560009

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through KPP Portal Only)

Karnataka Housing Board invite tender through Karnataka public procurement portal for below mentioned work.

Sl. No.	Name of the Work
1	Construction of KHB office building at Bidar District. **Work Indent & IFT No:** KHB/2025-26/BD/Work_Indent 641 & IFT No. 108/2025-26 Date: 18.11.2025 **Amont put to tender :** Rs. 71 ,06,126/-

Last date for submission of bid: 03.12.2025 upto 4:00 pm.

For further information, contact below mentioned office address: **Executive Engineer,** Karnataka Housing Board, Cauvery Bhavan, Bengaluru, Telephone No. 080-22273511/ 080-22100077. Website: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

DIPR/CP/JA/3917/2025-26
Sd/- Executive Engineer, Karnataka Housing Board, Benglauru.

KARNATAKA URBAN WATER SUPPLY AND DRAINAGE BOARD KALBURAGI DIVISION, KALBURAGI
Executive Engineer, Opp Mini Vidhan Soudha, Aiwan Shahi, Kalaburagi – 585 102.
Tel –08472-220815, Fax-08472-220816, Email. – kwbeegbg@rediffmail.com

No. KWB/EEG/TEC/AE-1/Jewargi-Jal Hi AMRIT/Tenders/2025-26/1826 Date: 19-11-2025

SHORT TERM BID NOTIFICATION (Through Kp-procurement Portal Only)

The Item Rate e – Tenders are invited from the firms / contractors who satisfy the Eligibility Criteria for the following works as detailed below:
1) Name and description of work: Construction of eco process disc high efficiency micro filter for the advance treatment and reuse of water in urban sewage treatment plant and other sewage water purification projects suitable for 5.83 MLD Capacity STP, supply of PPE KIT and safety equipment's, training program and capacity building construction of underground tank 10M X 6M X 5M and strom water drain on both side of approach road inside for Jewargi (TMC) STP under incentives provided under the 'JAL HI AMRIT' Initiative, AMRUT 2.0 (ATAL MISSION FOR REJUVENATION AND URBAN TRANSFORMATION) PROGRAM (LUMPSUM-NO VARIATION). 2) Approximate value of work (Rs.): **Rs. 79,84,292.00 Excluding GST.** 3) Earnest Money Deposit (Rs.) : Rs. 1,60,000.00, 4) Tender Processing Fee: As per Kp-procurement portal, 5) Period for completion Including monsoon (Months): Six months including Monsoon. 6) Contact for Information: Executive Engineer KUWS & D Board, Division, Kalaburagi. 7) Date and time for commencement of downloading of tender documents from the e-procurement portal: **20/11/2025 11.00 Hrs. onward,** 8) Last date & time for submission/uploading of the tender document in the Kp-procurement portal: **04/12/2025 up to 17.00 Hrs.** 9) Date & time of opening of the technical tenders: **06/12/2025 After 11:00 hrs.** 10) Date & time of opening of the financial tenders: Will be notified to the qualified tenderers. 11) Website Address: **www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

DIPR/Kalaburagi/747/KSMC&A/2025-26
Sd/- Executive Engineer
KUWS & D Board, Division Kalaburgi

Karnataka Tourism Infrastructure Limited
(A Government Undertaking)
CIN :U70100KA2015SGC081817
Karnataka One State, Many worlds — Department of Tourism
#54, 5th Floor, Indhana Bhavana, Racecourse Road, Opposite Renaissance Hotel, Bangalore-560001. Ph (080) 22352525.

ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: ಕೆ.ಟಿ.ಐ.ಎಲ್/ಯೋ–01/ಜೆ.ವಿ/ಗ.ಜಿ/04/2025–26/183 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 19.11.2025

TENDER NOTIFICATION

Karnataka Tourism Infrastructure Limited, Bangalore Invited the Respective Tenders for Development of Karnataka Tourism at (Karnataka public procurement portal) **https://www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in**. The details of the Tender & Calendar of Events are available at **https://www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in**. Portal.

Sl. No	Work Name	Indent No
1.	Selection of Project Development and Management Consultant (PDMC) for Development of Toy train facility at Bheeshmakere & Binkadakatte Zoo in Gadaga town, Gadag Dist	KTIL/2025-26/SE0057

Tender Details are available for download in E-procurement Portal **(https://www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in)** from **Dt:19.11.2025** Postponement of Calendar of events (if any), subsequent notification, changes, amendments and selection/ rejection of proposal shall be intimated only through Karnataka public procurement portal and will not be published in newspapers. KTIL reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the tenders received without assigning any reasons thereof.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer and Tender Inviting Authority,
Karnataka Tourism Infrastructure Limited
DIPR/CP/3910/NR/2025-26

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS
(Ordinary Original Civil Jurisdiction)
C.S. No. 167 of 2024

C.Sekar ...Plaintiff
Vs
Anuradha&Ors. ...Defendants

NOTICE

TO
D3. R.Jayabharathi,
Daughter of Loganathan
2nd Cross, 4th Main Road,
Pilla Reddy Nagar, Kasthuri Nagar,
OMBR Layout, Bangalore North,
Kalyan Nagar,Bangalore – 560 043

Please take note that in the above suit, an Application was taken out for substituted service bearing A.No. 3734 of 2025 before the Hon'ble Madras High Court. The said Application came up for hearing on 14/08/2025 and on 22/10/2025 and the Hon'ble Court was pleased to issue paper publication on or before 20/11/2025. You are called upon to enter appearance either in person or through a Counsel on 27/11/2025, failing which the matter will be heard and decided in your absence.

V. Srimathi
Avinash Wadhwani
Counsel for Plaintiff

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client Jayaramaiah, aged about 57 years, son of late Mallaiah, residing at: Thumbenahalli Village, K.P. Doddi Post, Kylancha Hobli, Ramanagara Taluk, Bengaluru South District, being the absolute owner of all that piece and parcel of immovable property agricultural land bearing Sy. No. 9/5, measuring 00-01 guntas situated at: Manchanayakanahalli Village, Bidadi Hobli, Ramanagara Taluk, Bengaluru South District. The above property is the self acquired property of my client. My client acquired the said property from its erstwhile owner Smt. Mamatha. The vendor of my client acquired the said property by virtue of registered gift deed dated 29-01-2008, which has been executed by Smt. Nagamma @ Nagarathnamma, daughter of Huchamma and late Gavirangaiah, which has been dly registered in the office of the Sub-Registrar, Ramanagara as document No. 6592/2007-08. Said Mamatha handed over the said original Registered gift deed to my client and the same was in the custody of my client. My client represented that he has misplaced/loss the original gift deed dated 29-01-2008, registred as document No. 6592/2007-08 when he went to get the Xerox of the same near Vidhana Soudha, Ramanagara, in that regard my client had filed a police complaint intimating the lost of said gift deed with Ijoor Police Ramanagara. If any person or persons finding the said gift deed, may pleased to hand over the same either to the undersigned nor to my client nor contact the undersigned over the above mentioned mobile number.
Contact Address:
NAVEEN KUMAR Y.S., Advocate, District Bar Association, Court Complex, Ramanagara-562159, Bengaluru South District.
Mobile No. 9686293851
Date: 19-11-2025

Document Lost

Ramesh S S/O P. R. Shivappa age 42 years Parashuramanapalli village,Kasaba Hobli, Bagepalli taluk, Chikkaballapur district.
I have filed a complaint with Bagepalli police station on 6/11/25 and 7/11/25 in front of Bagepalli taluk office for getting my land records and cheque books of my banks to be xeroxed
1) Union Bank A/C:-137500101007493
2) IDBI BACK A/C:- 363104000017222
3) UCO Bank Account No.:- 2138011 0022 597
4) Canara Bank Account No.:- 0427101018744(SB) & 0427201000202
5) IOB Bank Account Number:-35830100004002
I have filed a complaint with Bagepalli Police Station regarding the loss of the said bank cheque books and filed a complaint under C miss No. 38/25 and application No. 1024/1572/2025
I have issued a press release requesting to receive the 2025 receipt and retrieve its check books.

CH CLASSIFIEDS
To place a classified ad contact:
080-41209042

BENGALURU CENTRAL CITY CORPORATION
Office of the Executive Engineer, Shanthinagar Division, 9th Floor, P U Building, Bengaluru-560001

No.: EE/SN/TEND-12/2025-26 Date: 19.11.2025

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Only through KPP Portal) (Single Cover System)

The Executive Engineer (Shanthinagar Division), Bengaluru invites tenders from eligible contractors registered in Grater Bengaluru Authority / KPWD for the works detailed in the table below. **(Standard Tender Document - KW-1)**

Sl. No.	Name of the Work
1	Demolision of unauthorised construction of building at Ward No. 111 Josphine Rita Pinto Rep by its GPA Holder Thiru Margadarshi Construction Pvt Ltd Rep by Ltd MD Mr. S. Narayana, PID No. 76-122-4, Site No. 04, 4th Cross, Victoria Layout, Shanthalanagara Bengaluru. **Call-2. Approx. Value of Work:** 5,85,000.00. **EMD (in Rs.) according to Govt. order:** 14,625.00

Calendar of events: (1) Tender documents may be downloaded through procurement portal of the Government of Karnataka. **(2)** Tenders must be submitted online through procurement portal on or before **4:00 p.m.** on **18.12.2025. (3)** Date of opening Tenders is on **19.12.2025** at **4:30 p.m.** Further details may be obtained from the above office during office hours or website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
Shanthinagara Division, BCCC

CHAMUNDESHWARI ELECTRICITY SUPPLY CORPORATION LIMITED
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
Corporate Office, procurement Section, CESC, Mysuru-570017. Ph: 9448994705,
Email ID: gmpurc@cescmysore.org Website: www.cescmysore.org

CESC/GM(P)/DGM(P)/AGM(P-1)/2025-26/ 26452 Date: 19.11.2025

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION (E-PROCURMENT PORTAL ONLY)

CESC, Mysore invites Short Term Tenders from eligible bidders for carrying out the work of **"Reducing the distribution losses and HT-LT ratios of IP feeders"in Kothathi Sub-division, Mandya Division on Total turnkey basis**

Sl No.	O & M Section	11KV Feeder Name	Enquiry No / Date
1	Thaggalli	F-12 Mangala IP	C2-6422 /1911.2025
2	Thaggalli	F-04 Cheernalli IP	C2-6423 /19.11.2025
3	Kothathi	F-09 Bevinahalli IP	C2-6424 /19.11.2025
4	Kothathi	F-05U. K Gere IP	C2-6425 /19.11.2025
		Total	

The details regarding participation in the tender can be obtained through e-procurement portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** on or after **24.11.2025** For clarification contact help desk **+91-8046010000, +91-8068948777** or e-mail address **support@eprochelpdesk.com**

For Electricity related complaints Call: 1912

Sd/-
General Manager (Procurement), CESC, Mysuru
DIPR/MYSORE1247/SSC/2025-26

QUICK READ

Telangana CM launches Indiramma Saree Scheme

Hyderabad

Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Wednesday launched the Indiramma saree distribution scheme, giving one crore sarees to eligible women. The distribution will happen in two phases: village women by December 9, and 65 lakh urban women from March 1–8, aligning with International Women's Day. Reddy urged female ministers and MLAs to wear the sarees as symbols of women's pride. He said the initiative honors Indira Gandhi and supports women's empowerment through business and self-respect programs.

Khan Market becomes 24th costliest street

New Delhi

Delhi's Khan Market slipped one spot to become the 24th most expensive global high-street, with annual rent of USD 223 per sq ft, according to Cushman & Wakefield. It remains India's priciest retail location. London's New Bond Street tops the global list at USD 2,231 per sq ft. Rising demand and limited mall supply are driving India's premium high streets, including Connaught Place and Galleria Market. Gurugram, Mumbai, and New Delhi saw strong rent growth, highlighting India's expanding role in global retail.

PM Modi releases 21st PM-KISAN instalment

'With this instalment, a total of 11 crore farming families have received funds, exceeding ₹ 3.70 lakh crore to date'

COIMBATORE

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday released the 21st instalment of the PM-KISAN scheme worth Rs 18,000 crore from Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, supporting nine crore farmers across India.

With this instalment, a total of 11 crore farming families have received funds, exceeding Rs 3.70 lakh crore to date.

The Rs 2,000 assistance credited to beneficiaries' accounts brought smiles to farmers, who thanked the Prime Minister for this farmer-focused welfare scheme. In Sahibganj, Jharkhand, farmers expressed relief, saying the money helps buy seeds and fertilisers on time. In Ghazipur, Uttar Pradesh, the BJP district president highlighted that the scheme boosts local markets as farmers spend on essentials.

In Bihar's Koderma, farmers shared that they no longer need loans for farming. Women farmers also expressed gratitude for the financial aid. In Rajasthan's Kotputli-Behror, beneficiaries thanked the Prime Minister for easing financial distress. Union Minister Bhagirath Choudhary noted that the PM-KISAN scheme has become crucial for empowering small and marginal farmers.

Farmers in Madhya Pradesh's Neemuch said the funds help buy seeds, fertilisers, and equipment. Some also receive additional support from the state government, further aiding their agricultural needs. Beneficiaries across districts emphasised how the PM-KISAN scheme enables timely purchases and strengthens farming livelihoods.

Notably, the PM-KISAN programme is among the world's largest Direct Benefit Transfer initiatives, receiving global recognition for its role in providing timely financial support and improving the economic conditions of millions of farming families.

India hosts BIMSTEC Young Diplomats Programme

NEW DELHI

It aims at promoting regional cooperation and training diplomats from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar, Nepal, and Sri Lanka

India hosted the annual BIMSTEC Young Diplomats Interaction Programme at the Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service (SSIFS) in Delhi on Wednesday.

The week-long programme brought together 14 young diplomats from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar, Nepal, and Sri Lanka to engage in discussions and training sessions on regional cooperation and diplomacy.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said the initiative aims to expose young diplomats to new approaches in understanding geopolitical and geoeconomic developments, as well as priority areas for cooperation in the Bay of Bengal region. It is part of India's efforts to build stronger ties among future diplomats from BIMSTEC member countries.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had first announced the programme at the 6th BIMSTEC Summit in Bangkok, highlighting its role in strengthening institutional and capacity-building efforts in the region. The programme aligns with India's 'Neighborhood First' and 'Act East' policies.

SSIFS Dean, Ambassador Raj Kumar Srivastava, inaugurated the second Special Course for Diplomats from BIMSTEC countries. In his inaugural address, he spoke on the concept of diplomacy, the Indian philosophy of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' (the world is one family), and the pillars of Indian foreign policy, including strategic priorities and resilience.

He also discussed the '4Ts' of Diplomacy for Development—trade, technology, tourism, and talent—and highlighted India's initiatives such as the International Solar Alliance (ISA), Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI), IBSA, and Global BIMSTEC Alliance (GBA). The session also covered BIMSTEC's origin, purpose, and objectives.

BIMSTEC, the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation, connects South Asia with Southeast Asia. Its seven member states—Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, and Thailand—represent 1.7 billion people and a combined GDP of USD five trillion, making it a significant regional bloc.

Trinamool MP files FIR against Bengal Guv amid controversy

KOLKATA

The political clash between West Bengal Governor C.V. Ananda Bose and Trinamool Congress MP Kalyan Banerjee escalated on Wednesday as Banerjee lodged an FIR against the Governor at a Kolkata police station. The FIR cites Sections 61, 152, 192, 196, and 353 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, covering criminal conspiracy, acts endangering national integrity, provocation of riots, promoting enmity, and public mischief.

The complaint was filed at Hare Street Police station, a day after the Governor's office approached the Calcutta High Court against Banerjee. The suit claims Banerjee's remarks tarnished the dignity of the Governor and could create social unrest.

The controversy began last Saturday when Banerjee alleged that Raj Bhavan was sheltering BJP-linked "criminals" and distributing arms to harm Trinamool Congress workers. He added, "As long as an incompetent Governor like you remains, nothing good will happen in West Bengal."

Governor Bose responded on Sunday, calling Banerjee's statements "inflammatory, explosive, and irresponsible" and warned of strong legal action. He also demanded an unconditional public apology if the allegations were false.

On Monday, a joint search and combing operation was conducted within Raj Bhavan to verify Banerjee's claims. The operation reportedly found no evidence to support the allegations.

Following this, the Governor's office filed a legal suit at the Calcutta High Court on Tuesday, escalating the confrontation further. Banerjee's FIR and the Governor's suit mark a new phase in the ongoing tussle, highlighting growing political tensions in West Bengal between the state's ruling party and the central representative.

ED claims Al Falah chairperson tried fleeing

NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate on Wednesday claimed Al Falah Group chairperson Jawad Ahmed Siddiqui had incentives to flee India, as his family lives in the Gulf. He was arrested in a money laundering case involving Rs 415.10 crore from students through false NAAC and UGC claims. A court sent him to 13-day custody till December 1. The ED said his questioning is needed to trace the full extent of the crime and prevent obstruction, while Siddiqui's lawyer denied the allegations.

Chennithala accuses Vijayan govt of jeopardising Sabarimala pilgrimage

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Veteran Congress legislator Ramesh Chennithala on Wednesday accused Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan's government of deliberately jeopardising the Sabarimala pilgrimage. Chennithala claimed that it is becoming clear the state government's policy is to disrupt the annual Mandala season, affecting lakhs of devotees from across India.

"The government should have begun preparations at least six months ago. Instead, officials now blame the recently announced local body election code of conduct. What does an election code, announced just a week ago, have to do with months-long preparations?" asked Chennithala.

He added that even the Kerala High Court has criticised the state's lack of readiness. Reports indicate severe shortages of essential services, including medical aid, sanitation, accommodation, crowd management, and police deployment. Central forces' presence is reportedly inadequate, and coordination between departments is weak.

Pilgrims arriving at Pamba, Nilakkal, and other key transit points faced hardships such as lack of drinking water, toilets, transportation, resting areas, and emergency care. Devotees from Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Andhra Pradesh shared distressing experiences, raising concerns about safety and dignity.

Chennithala pointed out that the new Devaswom Board President, who assumed office just three days ago, expressed concern after witnessing the situation. While individual officials may not be at fault, he stressed the government has a constitutional and moral duty to ensure smooth pilgrimage conduct.

Questions have been raised on why Devaswom Minister V.N. Vasavan did not convene preparatory meetings or coordinate departments earlier.

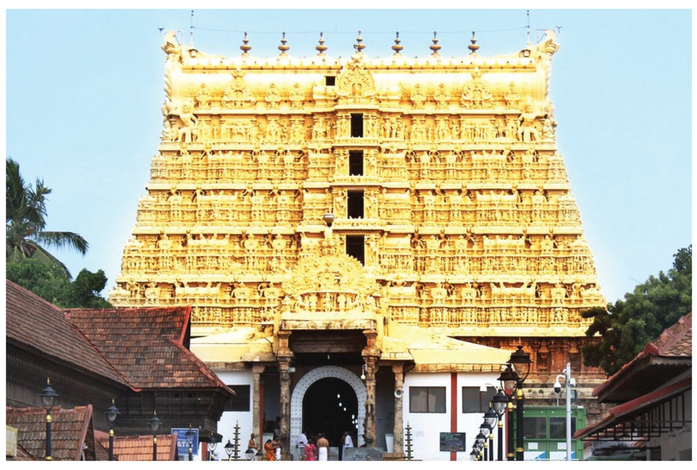
'Chaitanyanand Saraswati in safe, secure custody'

NEW DELHI

The Jail Authorities filed a report before the Patiala House Court, refuting the allegations made by Chaitanyanand Saraswati. It is stated that he is in safe and secure custody.

Earlier, Chaitanyanand had alleged that he had a threat to his life in Tihar Jail. It is stated that Saraswati has not named any person whom he has a threat. Saraswati is in judicial custody in a molestation case. Patiala House Court, on November 14, called for a report from the Superintendent of Jail. Pursuant to the court's order, the jail authorities filed a report with the Judicial Magistrate First Class (JMFC) Animesh Kumar on Tuesday. The report stated that Chaitanyananda Saraswati was called and heard in person regarding his apprehension of a threat inside the Jail.

During the interaction, he did not disclose or name any specific individual from whom he apprehended harm. He is in safe and secure custody, the report said.



Kerala HC seeks update on temple renovation progress

KOCHI

The Kerala High Court on Wednesday asked the Administrative Committee of the Padmanabhaswamy Temple to provide an update on the renovation of the temple's Moolavigraha (principal idol). The Court specifically sought information on the consent of the shilpis (traditional sculptors) and the finalisation of materials required for the restoration.

A Division Bench of Justice Devan Ramachandran and Justice M. B. Snehalatha was hearing a petition alleging defects in the Moolavigraha. Earlier, the Court had directed the Committee to submit a report on repair works. Standing Counsel informed the Bench that renovation cannot start without approval from the five identified shilpis, and the Committee is awaiting their consent.

The Court emphasised that the renovation must be carried out "with the sanctity that holds the cosmic power of the temple" and said shilpis' consent is essential. The expert panel also confirmed that the list of materials will be finalised within two weeks, keeping the timeline unchanged.

The petitioner's counsel raised concerns about potential delays without judicial oversight, but the Court clarified its current role is to ensure work is completed on schedule under the guidance of the Chief Thanthri.

Renovation can begin after the temple's Lakshadeepam festival ends on January 14, 2026. However, the Bench asked for updates on shilpis' consent and material readiness without waiting until then.

The Court also rejected a plea to appoint a former IAS officer as Special Commissioner for the festival, noting the temple is already managed by an Administrative Committee and an Advisory Committee. The Administrative Committee has been directed to submit a report after festival preparations. The matter will be reviewed again on December 10.

Chouhan criticises Cong over electoral failures

DHAMTARI

Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Wednesday sharply criticised Congress, saying the party has become a "burden" and its allies are suffering because of it. He made the remarks while addressing a farmers' convention in Dhamtari, Chhattisgarh, where he also disbursed the 21st instalment under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi scheme.

Chouhan said the Centre, under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, will not tolerate Naxalism or terrorism. Referring to recent anti-Maoist operations, he added that the killing of top Naxalite commander Madvi Hidma marked the "last nail in the coffin" of insurgency in the state.

Targeting Congress and its leader Rahul Gandhi, he said, "Wherever Congress goes, the party it joins sinks." He cited Bihar assembly elections, where the Congress-led alliance won only six seats, calling it a "disaster" for the party.

Chouhan accused Congress of allowing infiltrators into India for electoral gains and said both state and central governments will work together to remove them. He added that terrorism and Naxalism will not be tolerated and promised that development and peace will prevail across Chhattisgarh.

Highlighting government initiatives, Chouhan said the Centre and the state under Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai are focusing on rural development, agriculture, and infrastructure. He said 80 crore citizens now receive free ration and handed over a letter to build 2,426 km of roads connecting 780 villages at a cost of Rs 2,225 crore.

The Minister reiterated that ensuring food security, fair prices for farmers, and access to nutritious food remain top priorities for the government.

VVPAT not mandatory for local polls: EC

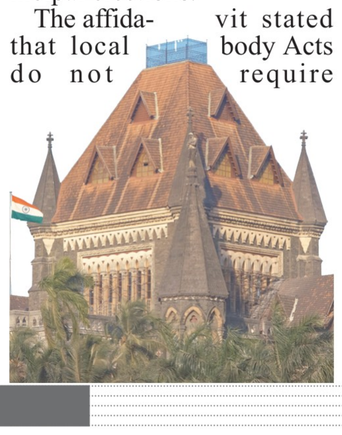
NAGPUR

The Maharashtra State Election Commission (SEC) on Wednesday told the Bombay High Court that Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) machines are not mandatory for local body elections and that their use is technically challenging. The statement came in response to a petition by Congress leader Prafulla Gudadhe, who sought the use of VVPAT for upcoming municipal polls in Maharashtra.

Gudadhe's petition argued that VVPAT is essential for a transparent election process and requested that polls either use VVPAT or revert to ballot papers. He also sought to restrain the SEC from conducting elections with Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) without VVPAT.

During the hearing before a bench led by Justice Anil Kilor, the SEC explained that the Supreme Court ruling mandating VVPAT applies only to general elections, not local body polls. The commission added that VVPAT was not used in the 2017 municipal elections.

The affidavit stated that local body Acts do not require VVPAT, and designing machines for multi-member, multi-post constituencies, like village panchayats and municipal councils, is technically difficult. In contrast, parliamentary and assembly elections are single-member, single-post contests, where EVMs are designed for use with VVPAT.



The High Court has posted the matter for further hearing on Thursday. The first phase of Maharashtra's local body elections is scheduled for December 2.

The petition emphasized that the right to vote is fundamental and every citizen should be able to verify that their vote is cast correctly, highlighting the importance of VVPAT in ensuring voter confidence.

INDIRA TRIBUTE

Priyanka highlights Grandma's role in making India a nuclear power

NEW DELHI

Senior Congress leaders paid emotional tributes to former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on her birth anniversary, remembering her as a symbol of courage, patriotism, and dedication to India's progress.

Priyanka Gandhi Vadra described her grandmother as her "ideal," praising her strength, compassion, and determination. She highlighted Indira Gandhi's role in making India a nuclear power and strengthening the nation's infrastructure. "Grandma, through the values you instilled in me, you are always with me," Priyanka wrote on X.

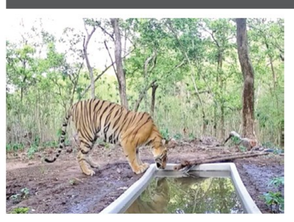
Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi also remembered his grandmother, saying her courage and principles guide him in making bold decisions for the nation. He added that her patriotism and ethics inspire him to stand against injustice.

Rahul Gandhi, along with Sonia Gandhi, Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge, General Secretary K.C. Venugopal, and other leaders, visited Shakti Sthal to offer floral tributes. Kharge praised Indira Gandhi's "dynamic leadership" and "immense political courage," noting her dedication to public service and the nation's unity.

Indira Gandhi, often called the "Iron Lady of India," was born on November 19, 1917, in Allahabad (now Prayagraj) to Jawaharlal and Kamala Nehru. Her birth anniversary is observed as National Integration Day, honoring her significant contributions to India's political, social, and economic development.

Through these tributes, Congress leaders emphasized her enduring influence on India's growth and the inspiration she continues to provide to the nation's leaders and citizens alike.

QUICK READ



Tiger returns to Gujarat after three decades

Ahmedabad
A tiger has returned to Gujarat more than 30 years after the species went extinct in the state. The big cat has settled in Ratanmahal Wildlife Sanctuary, bringing new hope for reviving the tiger population in a region known mainly for Asiatic lions. State Forest and Environment Minister Arjun Modhwadia said Gujarat can now proudly call itself home to three major big cats — the lion, leopard and tiger. He added that tigers once lived in good numbers but slowly vanished over time.

Art show traces Shipra's five-decade journey

New Delhi
Artist Shipra Bhattacharya's solo show in Delhi offers a rare look at her long artistic journey, highlighting how her work portrays women, their dignity, and their quiet moments of reflection. Returning to the city after ten years, her exhibition "In Bloom" at Bikaner House showcases five decades of figurative art marked by emotional depth and clarity. From lone figures on terraces to pieces reflecting shared trauma, the display shows how her signature style has grown and transformed over time.

Build technology that reduce inequality, improve lives: Prez

'Inventions are meaningful only when they make life better for people'

NEW DELHI

President Droupadi Murmu on Wednesday attended the fifth convocation of the National Institute of Technology (NIT) Delhi, where she encouraged graduating students to focus on building technologies that reduce inequality and bring real change to people's lives.

She said true progress comes not only from new inventions but from how these inventions improve society.

In a message shared on X, the President's office said she advised students to remember that inventions are meaningful only when they make life better for people. She stressed that systems and technologies created by young engineers should aim to close gaps in society and give people new hope.

On Tuesday, President Murmu also presented the sixth National Water Awards and the Jal Sanchay–Jan Bhagidari Awards at a function in New Delhi. Speaking at the event, she said that human civilisation has always grown around rivers, lakes and other water sources. She added that India's traditions give great importance to water, recalling that even the national song begins with the word "Sujalam," meaning a land blessed with abundant water.

The President said efficient water use is a global necessity, especially for India, where water resources are limited compared to the population. She noted that low per capita availability and climate change are worsening the strain on the water cycle, making joint efforts by the government and public essential. She welcomed the creation of over 35 lakh groundwater recharge structures under the Jal Sanchay–Jan Bhagidari initiative and highlighted industries adopting circular water systems and zero liquid discharge, helping strengthen long-term water conservation.

Doval hosts Colombo Conclave security chiefs

NEW DELHI

The meeting seeks to enhance collaboration among participating nations and bolster joint initiatives to improve regional and stability throughout the Indian Ocean area, fostering stronger collective commitment.

National Security Advisor Ajit Doval will host top security officials from Colombo Security Conclave (CSC) member countries in New Delhi on Thursday, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) announced in an official statement.

The meeting aims to deepen cooperation among participating nations and strengthen collective efforts on regional security in the Indian Ocean region.

According to the MEA, representatives from the Maldives, Mauritius, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh will take part in the discussions as full Member States. Seychelles will join the meeting as an Observer State, while Malaysia has been invited as a Guest country for this round of talks. The gathering will bring together senior officials responsible for shaping security strategies in their respective nations.

The previous, sixth meeting of CSC National Security Advisors was held in Mauritius in December 2023. Member States again met in August 2024 in Sri Lanka during the signing ceremony for the Founding Documents of the Conclave. Deputy National Security Advisers have also held regular interactions, with their latest virtual meeting taking place in July 2024.

The CSC was formed to boost security cooperation among regional countries and tackle shared challenges affecting Indian Ocean stability. The seventh NSA meeting will review progress in areas such as maritime safety, counterterrorism, transnational crime, cyber security, and disaster relief, while also discussing the 2026 Roadmap and Action Plan. The MEA says the CSC's main aim is to address cross-border threats through these five cooperation pillars. The New Delhi meeting will help set common priorities for the coming years.

BLO dies after call; family cites work pressure

JAIPUR

A Booth Level Officer (BLO) on Special Intensive Revision duty died of a heart attack in Sawai Madhopur on Wednesday, moments after receiving a phone call from the tehsildar, his family alleged. The victim, Hariram alias Hariom Bairwa, a 34-year-old Grade-III teacher posted at Sevti Khurd Government School, collapsed suddenly and was taken to a hospital, where he was declared dead. This is the fourth reported BLO death this month, linked by families to heavy workload and stress.

Afghan min arrives in India to strengthen trade ties

NEW DELHI

Afghanistan's Minister of Industry and Commerce, Alhaj Nooruddin Azizi, arrived in New Delhi on Wednesday for a five-day official visit aimed at strengthening trade and investment relations between India and Afghanistan. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) welcomed him warmly and noted that improving economic ties remains the main purpose of his visit. MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal posted that India looks forward to advancing trade and investment partnerships with Afghanistan during the minister's stay.

Azizi is expected to visit the India International Trade Fair (IITF) 2025 and hold talks with senior Indian officials dealing with trade and commerce. His visit is significant as it marks one of the highest-level engagements between India and the Taliban administration since the group took control of Kabul in August 2021.

This trip follows the earlier visit of Mawlawi Amir Khan Muttaqi, Afghanistan's Foreign Minister, who spent six days in India in October 2025. During that visit, India and Afghanistan agreed to set up a joint trade committee to improve economic cooperation. Muttaqi said both countries discussed new opportunities in Afghanistan's minerals and energy sectors and invited Indian companies to explore investment possibilities.

Muttaqi's visit also led to an important diplomatic step. India restored its Technical Mission in Kabul to the status of a full Embassy, reflecting New Delhi's intention to deepen engagement with Afghanistan. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar made the announcement during his meeting with Muttaqi.

According to the MEA, upgrading the mission shows India's commitment to supporting Afghanistan's development efforts. The Embassy in Kabul will now play a stronger role in humanitarian assistance, capacity-building programmes, and broader development initiatives that match the needs and goals of the Afghan people.

Delhi cops bust major drug syndicate, seize mobile lab

NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police Special Cell has broken a major inter-state drug syndicate operating across Delhi-NCR, Mumbai and Bengaluru. Officials said four people of African origin were arrested, and a mobile drug-making lab was seized during the crackdown. Police recovered 20.146 kg of methamphetamine and 700 drug tablets, worth over Rs 100 crore in the international market.

The operation was carried out by Inspectors Ranjeet Singh and Sanjeev Kumar under the guidance of ACP Neeraj Kumar. Acting on a tip-off received on November 1, police set a trap near Dhaula Kuan around midnight. They caught the first accused, Ezebuenyi Esther Osita, with a red trolley bag carrying 17.146 kg of methamphetamine and drug tablets. She later revealed details about a wider network sending drugs to Bengaluru and Mumbai. Based on her information, police arrested Charles Chimuanya Ebereonwu from Chander Vihar on November 5. He was found with another 3 kg of methamphetamine. During raids, police also discovered a mobile drug factory running from a rented house in Nilothi Extension. The lab had chemicals, solvents and various equipment used to produce methamphetamine.

Khurshid seeks PM's response in Parliament on blast lapse

NEW DELHI

Senior Congress leader Salman Khurshid on Wednesday questioned the government's security policy after the recent blast near Delhi's Red Fort, saying the incident raises a "serious question mark" over intelligence preparedness. He demanded that Prime Minister Narendra Modi give a clear answer in Parliament on what he called a major lapse.

Khurshid, a former External Affairs Minister, said the government's "strategic failures" are now visible and argued that India needs a steady, long-term foreign policy instead of what he described as a "personalised and episodic" approach. He made the remarks while speaking about a new book on foreign policy that he co-edited.

Commenting on the Congress' demand for clarity on the government's "new normal doctrine"—which treated major terror attacks as acts of war—Khurshid said the opposition is not being aggressive but wants accountability. He said the government has not issued a clear statement on how the intelligence failure took place or what its larger implications are.

Khurshid also said the opposition wants an early Parliament discussion on the issue and believes the prime minister should answer directly on the floor of the House. He added that national security challenges must be faced together, not along party lines, and urged the government to trust the opposition.

His remarks come days after Congress demanded an all-party meeting and urged the government to advance the Winter Session of Parliament for a debate. The blast last week killed 13 people and injured several others, just hours after the arrest of eight people linked to a "white-collar terror module."

NGT probes illegal quarry operating near Kharghar hospital

MUMBAI

The National Green Tribunal has flagged an allegedly illegal stone quarry operating behind Tata Cancer Hospital (ACTREC) in Kharghar and set a joint hearing for December 5. RTI replies confirmed no permissions were issued for the quarry, prompting NatConnect Foundation to seek an immediate halt, citing risks to patients, equipment and the hospital structure. The NGT's Western Bench has issued notices to Raigad authorities for detailed reports, as the quarry continues without approvals.

Girl stabbed to death for 'rejecting' proposal, I held

RAMESWARAM

A 21-year-old man was arrested on Wednesday for allegedly stabbing a Class 12 student to death in broad daylight while she was on her way to school. Police said the girl had repeatedly rejected his love proposal, which reportedly led to the attack. The victim lived with her family in Cherankottai near Rameswaram. According to police, the accused, Muniyaraj, from the same locality, had been stalking her for several days and pressuring her to accept his proposal. The girl's father, Mariyappan, a fisherman, had recently confronted him about the harassment and warned him to stop.

Upset over the continued rejection and the warning from her family, the accused allegedly targeted the girl on Wednesday morning. Police said he confronted her on a public road and stabbed her multiple times with a knife. The teenager collapsed on the spot and died before help arrived.

Passersby immediately alerted the police. Officers from the Port Police Station reached the location, recovered the body and sent it to a government hospital for post-mortem examination. A murder case has been registered under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. Police said the accused fled after the attack but was traced and arrested by a special team. He is now being questioned, and further investigation is underway.

AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K. Palaniswami condemned the incident, saying it exposed growing concerns over women's safety.

Australia showcases expertise to boost India partnership

NEW DELHI

Australia is deepening its education partnership with India by highlighting its strengths in vocational training at DIDAC India 2025.

Austrade Trade and Investment Commissioner Vik Singh said this is the first time the Australian government, along with its state and territory partners, is taking part in the event. A strong team of 24 companies and 35 delegates is representing Australia this year.

Singh said DIDAC India is expected to see nearly 40,000 visitors over five days, giving both countries a major platform to work together. He noted that India aims to become the "skilling capital" of the world, and Australia hopes to support this goal by sharing its training systems, such as the well-known TAFE model, and by building partnerships with Indian institutions and ed-tech companies.

He added that Australia wants to co-create solutions that help India grow a stronger, more skilled workforce. According to him, this collaboration will not only support India's development but also create new opportunities for both countries.

Singh also spoke about how the National Education Policy 2020 has opened new doors for global cooperation. He said the policy has helped international institutions enter India more easily. Australia is now the first country to set up university campuses in India. Deakin University and the University of Wollongong are already operating, and four or five more campuses are expected soon. By next year, nearly 10 Australian campuses may be active in India.

DIDAC India, Asia's largest education technology event, will hold its 15th edition from November 18–20, 2025, at Yashobhoomi in New Delhi. The event brings together global partners and showcases the latest trends in teaching, training, and skill development.

SIR CRISIS

'States lag behind in distribution of election forms'

NEW DELHI

The second phase of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls is still facing delays, with nearly 61.55 lakh enumeration forms yet to be given to voters across 12 states and union territories.

A total of 50.97 crore forms were planned for distribution, and so far, Booth Level Officers (BLOs) have managed to hand out 50.35 crore forms, reaching about 98.79% completion. Out of these, around 8.14 crore forms have been digitised as of November 19.

Tamil Nadu accounts for the largest share of pending forms, with about 31.05 lakh still to be distributed out of its total 6.41 crore. Kerala follows with a gap of 8.33 lakh out of 2.78 crore voters. Uttar Pradesh has around five lakh voters remaining, and Rajasthan has 4.58 lakh pending, not counting the Anta Assembly constituency, where SIR work was postponed due to the recent by-poll. Anta alone has about 2.28 lakh voters.

Several smaller regions have made better progress. Lakshadweep has completed distribution for all 57,813 voters. In Goa, only 31 voters remain, while 54,467 voters are pending in Puducherry. Other states still finishing the process include Madhya Pradesh with 1.37 lakh pending forms, Gujarat with 2.12 lakh, West Bengal with 2.26 lakh, and Chhattisgarh with 2.76 lakh.

Kerala's Chief Electoral Officer has warned of strict action against anyone blocking BLOs from carrying out their duties. Across all 12 regions, 5.33 lakh BLOs and 10.41 lakh Booth Level Agents have been appointed to complete the massive SIR exercise.

QUICK READ

Fraud-Awareness Drive Launched Across Israel

Tel Aviv

The Bank of Israel has started a nationwide campaign to help people understand and avoid financial fraud, as digital scams continue to rise. The effort is led by the Financial Education Forum, which includes major banks and credit card companies. The campaign will appear on TV, radio and online, explaining common online scams and ways to protect personal data. In December, the forum and Israel Police will hold free lectures in Hebrew, Arabic and Russian. The initiative follows years of similar awareness programs.

Lawmakers Protest Steep Airfare Hike From Quetta

Balochistan

Members of the Balochistan Assembly expressed strong concern over what they described as unfair and sudden increases in airfares on flights from Quetta. Both treasury and opposition lawmakers supported a resolution demanding immediate action against PIA and private airlines for sharply raising ticket prices. The resolution, moved by JUI-F member Shahida Rauf, noted that one-way fares to Karachi had reached PKR 43,000–60,000, while flights to Islamabad were now priced above PKR 70,000, causing hardship for travellers.

New Digital Wallet Simplifies TAP Loyalty Payments

Tel Aviv

FinitiOne has introduced what it calls the world's first platform that lets users store and redeem loyalty points directly through a digital wallet and pay instantly with TAP. The system allows organisations and consumer clubs to issue smart prepaid cards connected to Apple Pay and Google Pay. Customers can redeem benefits at any terminal using the Sheba network. The company says the tool could reduce billions in unused loyalty rewards and help small businesses join customer clubs.

Trump, MBS unveil investment and defence partnership deals

Trump and Saudi crown prince announce sweeping agreements reshaping bilateral ties

WASHINGTON

President Donald Trump and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman announced a wide set of agreements aimed at deepening strategic ties, boosting American jobs and strengthening regional security. The White House said the deals put American workers, industry and national interests at the centre of the partnership.

A major highlight was Saudi Arabia's plan to invest USD 1 trillion in the United States, sharply higher than the earlier USD 600 billion pledge. Trump also approved a new defence package that includes future deliveries of F-35 fighter jets and the sale of nearly 300 US-made tanks. Officials said the purchases

will support American defence jobs while helping Saudi Arabia build its own military strength.

Both sides also signed a Joint Declaration on Civil Nuclear Energy Cooperation. The agreement ensures US firms will be preferred partners for Saudi nuclear projects, with all work following strict non-proliferation rules. The White House said the long-term cooperation would help secure America's leadership in global energy technology.

Another agreement was the Critical Minerals Framework, which aims to secure and diversify supply chains for important minerals. An AI Memorandum of Understanding was also signed, giving Saudi Arabia controlled access to advanced American artificial intelligence systems while blocking foreign misuse.

Trump and the crown prince also approved the US-Saudi Strategic Defence Agreement to strengthen defence cooperation and improve regional deterrence. The White House said the deal supports the "America First" agenda by easing operations for US defence firms in Saudi Arabia and adding burden-sharing funds.

During his visit, the crown prince received a ceremonial welcome at the White House. He also expressed interest in joining the Abraham Accords but said progress toward a two-state solution for Palestinians remained essential.

New Consulates Strengthen Bilateral India-Russia Partnership

MOSCOW

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar said on Wednesday that the launch of two new Indian Consulates General in Russia marks a major step in strengthening relations between the two countries. The new offices, opened in Yekaterinburg and Kazan, are expected to support trade, technology links and cultural engagement.

At the inauguration ceremony, Jaishankar said the Indian government had worked steadily for months to make the consulates operational at the earliest possible time. He thanked the Russian government for its full support, especially Deputy Foreign Minister Andrey Rudenko and the regional administrations of Tatarstan and Sverdlovsk Oblast. Indian Ambassador Vinay Kumar and officials from both regions also attended the event.

Jaishankar said Yekaterinburg holds strong industrial value for Russia and is often called the country's third capital. The area is an important centre for heavy engineering, defence production, gem cutting, chemicals, metallurgy and medical equipment. It also hosts the INNOPROM international economic forum, which attracts businesses from many countries. The minister said the new consulate would help Indian and Russian industries work together more easily in areas such as technology, science and manufacturing.

He said Kazan is a major, diverse Russian city linking Asia, known for oil, industry and manufacturing. The new consulate will aid culture, students and tourism. He added that both missions will strengthen services, boost trade and deepen long-term India-Russia cooperation across economic, cultural and academic fields.

EAM S. Jaishankar opened two new Indian Consulates in Russia, saying they will boost trade, technology cooperation, tourism and cultural ties between the two nations

Rights Body Criticises Pakistan Court over Mahrang Bail Denial

QUETTA

Pakistan's Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) has again denied bail to Baloch Yakjehti Committee (BYC) central organiser Mahrang Baloch and several other leaders, despite what human rights groups say is a lack of solid evidence.

The decision follows months of custody for Mahrang and BYC activists Bibagar Baloch, Sibgatullah Shah Ji, Beebow Baloch, and Gulzadi Baloch, raising concerns over prolonged detention and political suppression.

The court cited FIR 89/25, alleging that the leaders provoked individuals who later broke the Civil Hospital gate and removed corpses. The rights body said there is no credible evidence linking the BYC leadership to the incident, and that several co-accused in the same case have already received bail.

The BYC condemned the ruling, stating that Pakistani law requires consistent treatment when bail is granted to co-accused, a principle it says was ignored. The rights body also criticised the judge's conduct, alleging bias and a violation of established legal standards.

While Mahrang Baloch and Gulzadi Baloch were granted bail in 10 FIRs, they were denied in others. Similarly, Bibagar Baloch, Sibgatullah Shah Ji, and Beebow Baloch received bail in 9 FIRs but were rejected in remaining cases.

The BYC affirmed its determination to challenge the decision in the High Court, calling the ATC ruling "unjust" and emphasising that attempts to silence peaceful political activists will not succeed.

Authorities impose curfew after serious clash in Simara area

Curfew Enforced In Bara after Youth-UML Violent Clash

KATHMANDU

A strict eight-hour curfew has been enforced in the Simara airport area of Nepal's Bara district after a violent clash broke out between Gen-Z protesters and CPN-UML supporters on Wednesday. Officials said the curfew began at mid-day and will stay in place to prevent further unrest. It covers 500 metres on both sides of the Gandak canal–Pathlaiya road and the area around Simara airport. All flights between Kathmandu and Simara have been stopped for safety reasons.

The clash started when Gen-Z youths protested upon hearing that senior UML leaders were arriving at the airport. UML General Secretary Shankar Pokharel and leader Mahesh Basnet were scheduled to fly to Parwanipur for a programme, which triggered the demonstrations.

Tensions have been high

since Prime Minister Sushila Karki recommended dissolving the House of Representatives on September 12, following the nationwide Gen-Z movement that turned violent. The protests on September 8 and 9 left at least 78 people dead. The Karki administration has been tasked with holding snap polls on March 5.

The dissolved UML parliamentary party decided on Tuesday that restoring Parliament was essential and moved to file a writ petition in the Supreme Court. Over a dozen similar petitions are already under hearing. The UML, the former House's second-largest party, assigned Mahesh Bartaula and Sunita Baral to represent it. Bartaula argued that appointing ex-chief justice Karki as prime minister violated constitutional rules and called the House dissolution undemocratic. The party seeks Parliament's reinstatement to reverse this "anti-democratic step."

South Korea Urges Improved US Visas For Investing Firms

SEOUL

A senior South Korean diplomat has called for improving US visa processes for Korean companies investing in the United States, saying it is key to maintaining bilateral cooperation.

Jung Ki-hong, Ambassador for Public Diplomacy, made the remarks during a meeting with US Assistant Secretary of State Michael DeSombre in Washington on Tuesday, the South Korean Foreign Ministry said.

The discussions focused on ensuring stable operations for Korean businesses in the US, including follow-up measures after over 300 Korean workers were detained in a Georgia immigration raid in September.

The incident led to the creation of a bilateral visa working group to address entry challenges for Korean firms. Separately, Jung met with US Under Secretary of State Sarah Rogers to discuss strengthening cultural exchanges and public diplomacy projects, both bilaterally and in a trilateral framework with Japan. Last week, officials from both countries celebrated Korean National Day and Armed Forces Day in Washington, highlighting decades of cooperation.

EU Groups Criticise ICT Verdict against Former PM Hasina

DHAKA

Five European rights and advocacy groups have strongly criticised the International Crimes Tribunal's (ICT) verdict against Bangladesh's former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. In a joint statement released in London, the groups said the judgement was "politically motivated" and urged global organisations to intervene, local media reported on Wednesday.

The coalition sent letters to several international bodies, including the UN Secre-

tary-General, the UN Human Rights Commissioner, Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, the European External Action Service and the US State Department. They said the ICT, which was created to examine crimes committed during the 1971 Liberation War, had "moved away from its core principles." They warned that trials held in absentia weaken judicial independence and violate global human rights standards.

The groups also raised concerns about what they described as rushed proceedings, lack of proper legal defence, limited defence witnesses and signs of possible collusion. Their criticism came after the ICT on Monday sentenced Sheikh Hasina to death for "crimes against humanity" related to protests that took place in July last year. The tribunal sentenced former Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal to death and gave ex-Police Chief Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun five years after he turned state witness. Sheikh Hasina rejected the charges, calling the verdict from a "rigged tribunal" under interim Chief Advisor Muhammad Yunus politically motivated. She said the aim was to oust her and weaken the Awami League. She also accused the government of failing in law and order, suppressing minorities, curbing women's rights, harassing journalists.

Massive Fire in Oita City Destroys Hundreds Of Buildings

TOKYO

A devastating fire swept through a densely populated area in Oita city overnight, killing one person and damaging over 170 buildings, local authorities said on Wednesday. The blaze erupted in the Saganoseki port district on Tuesday and has been burning for more than 12 hours. Around 180 residents were evacuated as firefighters battled the flames, which spread across roughly 48,900 square meters, including forested areas.

Police confirmed the death of one individual at the scene and are trying to determine whether the body belongs to a missing 76-year-old man.

The Oita Prefectural Government requested assistance from the Self-Defense Forces to support firefighting and relief efforts. Mayor Shinya Adachi said he does not expect further damage, while senior official Shogo Fujikawa noted that smoke levels are decreasing and control measures are underway, though caution is still advised.

A strong wind advisory issued by the Japan Meteorological Agency earlier contributed to the fire's rapid spread. In response, the central government set up a liaison centre at the Prime Minister's Office to monitor the situation.

Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi expressed gratitude to firefighters, local authorities, and the Self-Defense Forces for their efforts and pledged full government support.

SU DO KU

Brain-Bender: Can You Solve It?

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		6		4	8	1	5	
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	5		6	9			4	3
	1	3		2	5	8		
	4	9	8	7		5		6
	7		5		6	4		9
9		5	7	3		6	2	
3		4	2		9	7		5

4	1	2	3	8	9	7	5	6
7	9	5	1	2	6	8	4	3
6	8	3	5	4	7	1	9	2
2	3	6	4	9	8	5	1	7
8	5	9	7	1	2	3	6	4
1	7	4	6	5	3	2	8	9
9	6	1	2	3	5	4	7	8
5	2	7	8	6	4	9	3	1
3	4	8	9	7	1	6	2	5

Solutions to Yesterday's puzzle

Fill a 9×9 grid with numbers so that each row, column and 3×3 section contain all of the digits between 1 and 9.

Afghan Minister Visits India to Boost Chabahar Port Usage

KABUL

Afghan Industry and Commerce Minister Alhaj Nooruddin Azizi arrived in New Delhi on Wednesday, beginning an official visit aimed at activating and effectively utilising India-developed Chabahar Port in Iran and attracting more investments. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) welcomed the delegation, noting that advancing bilateral trade and investment ties is the key focus of the visit.

During the trip, the Afghan delegation will meet Indian government officials, including ministers of foreign affairs and commerce, as well as traders, investors, and private sector representatives. Discussions will focus on expanding economic cooperation, facilitating trade, creating joint investment opportunities, and strengthening Afghanistan's role in regional transit routes.

DENGUE CRISIS

Punjab Dengue Surge Raises Serious Cover-Up Claims

LAHORE

Punjab is facing a fast-spreading dengue outbreak, with the worst impact reported in the southern districts.

Internal sources in the health system say many dengue deaths are occurring but are not being officially recorded.

Several health workers claim the provincial authorities are downplaying the situation by underreporting cases and hiding the true number of deaths.

Multan and Faisalabad are currently facing the most alarming rise in dengue infections.

This sharp increase clearly contradicts earlier claims by the health department that the situation was "fully under control." Medical teams in South Punjab say dengue-positive cases have increased almost ten times in just a few weeks.

Doctors and public-health specialists allege that several dengue-related deaths took place in major government hospitals in Multan. However, staff responsible for reporting these deaths were reportedly told not to enter them into the dengue dashboard.

Health experts also say district commissioners and district health officials are pressuring field teams to hide both deaths and rising positivity rates.

A recent case involving a young guard, Mohammad Imran, has raised serious concerns.

His crucial NS1 test was sent on the ninth day of fever, even though WHO guidelines say the test's accuracy drops sharply after the seventh day. Later tests confirmed dengue, but Imran died from severe internal bleeding after his platelet count fell dangerously low.

Hospitals in Multan, including Nishtar Hospital, are overcrowded, forcing doctors to shift patients to general wards.

The Dengue Expert Advisory Group has warned the government about major failures in prevention and urged immediate action.

RBI may cut repo rate by 0.25% in December meeting

Morgan Stanley expects the RBI to cut rates in December and adopt a cautious, data-driven stance for future policy moves

MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is expected to cut the repo rate by 0.25 percentage points to 5.25 per cent at its Monetary Policy Committee meeting in the first week of December, according to a new report by global financial services firm Morgan Stanley. The report says the central bank will likely remain cautious even after this reduction, shifting to a data-based approach for future decisions.

According to the report, the RBI is currently moving through a three-part easing cycle that includes interest rates, liquidity, and regulatory changes. Once the December rate cut is implemented, the central bank is expected to pause and closely study how these policy adjustments affect domestic economic activity and inflation trends.

On fiscal matters, Morgan Stanley believes the government will continue with a measured approach, focusing on gradual consolidation while keeping capital expenditure as a priority. This balanced strategy, the report says, is essential for maintaining steady growth over the medium term.

The report also predicts that India's headline consumer price inflation may rise modestly in 2026–27 after expected lower levels in 2025. However, it should still move towards the RBI's medium-term target of 4 per cent. Both food and core inflation are expected to stabilise between 4 and 4.2 per cent year-on-year, helping keep inflation expectations steady and supporting consumer confidence.

India's current account deficit is expected to stay near 1% of GDP, supported by strong services exports and a solid external balance sheet. The RBI raised FY26 GDP growth to 6.8% but expects early-year slowdown, while lowering its FY26 inflation forecast to 2.6%.

HDK, Odisha CM review Rourkela Steel plant expansion

Union Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy and Odisha CM Mohan Charan Majhi held detailed talks on clearing long-pending issues slowing Rourkela Steel Plant's major expansion plan and other key development projects.

BHUBANESWAR

Union Minister of Heavy Industries and Steel H.D. Kumaraswamy met Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi at Lok Seva Bhawan on Wednesday and held detailed discussions on long-pending issues related to the expansion of the Rourkela Steel Plant in Sundargarh district. The plant, operated by Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL), is set for a major upgrade under its proposed 9.5 million tonnes per annum (MTPA) expansion plan. Speaking to reporters after the meeting, Kumaraswamy described the discussion as "lengthy and fruitful". He said several issues had remained unresolved for many years, especially those connected to land acquisition. The Chief Minister, he added, assured quick action to clear these hurdles. According to the Union Minister, a committee formed after earlier talks in Delhi has already begun working on settling all outstanding concerns.

Kumaraswamy praised the Chief Minister's proactive approach and said most issues were now moving toward closure. He stressed that Odisha would play a key role in achieving Prime Minister Narendra Modi's target of increasing national steel production. The expansion of the Rourkela Steel Plant, along with rising contributions from private steel makers, would significantly strengthen India's overall steel capacity, he said. The Centre, he added, remained committed to supporting both public and private sector units.

The Chief Minister's Office said discussions focused on smooth land acquisition for the plant's expansion. Majhi called the project vital for growth and jobs.

A committee will address pending issues, while talks also covered land for Rourkela's proposed airport.

QUICK READ

KEC shares fall as Power Grid bars firm from new bids

New Delhi

KEC International's shares dropped over 7 per cent on Wednesday after Power Grid Corporation of India barred the company from bidding for new tenders for nine months. Power Grid said the action was linked to alleged violations in an earlier case. KEC clarified that ongoing Power Grid projects will continue and only new bids are restricted. The firm said it is considering legal options and does not expect a major impact due to its strong order book and steady tender pipeline.

Tata AIA launches flexible Maha Raksha term plan

Mumbai

Tata AIA Life Insurance has introduced Maha Raksha Supreme Select, a term insurance plan designed to offer strong protection with greater flexibility. The plan allows policyholders to increase their cover during major life events such as marriage, childbirth, or taking a home loan, ensuring their protection matches growing responsibilities. It also includes an annual top-up option, letting customers raise coverage by 5% to 20% each year to manage inflation and rising financial needs.

Railways to deploy AI-driven logistics platform

Mumbai

ROQIT Greenfield Digital, a unit of Aion-Tech Solutions, has secured a contract from Indian Railways to design and deploy an AI-based logistics platform for light and medium parcel deliveries. The pilot is set to begin with South Central Railway between January and February next year, followed by a nationwide rollout. The company said the platform will create a fully digital small-parcel ecosystem. It added that the project is a major step toward modernising India's logistics network through sustainable technology.

Investor jitters grew after the Supreme Court's sharp criticism of investigative agencies led to a steep drop in Sammaan Capital's stock

Sammaan Capital shares fall 13% after SC criticism of CBI

MUMBAI

Sammaan Capital's shares saw a sharp fall on Wednesday after the Supreme Court strongly criticised the slow and inconsistent approach of several investigative agencies examining allegations against the company. The stock dropped 13.33 per cent to close at Rs 158.40, reflecting investor concern after the court's pointed remarks.

The Supreme Court questioned the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) and the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) for what it called a "friendly" and casual approach in the ongoing probe.

The bench noted that despite the seriousness of the charges, the agencies appeared unwilling to move ahead with the required urgency.

The court expressed worry over SEBI's handling of the matter, accusing the market regulator of showing "double standards".

It said SEBI must not delay action in a case that may involve major financial irregularities and could potentially harm investors. The court also made it clear that SEBI has full authority to conduct a detailed investigation and should exercise that authority without hesitation.

The Supreme Court urged the CBI to file an FIR quickly, noting it would help the ED deepen its money-laundering probe.

The ED said it will meet the CBI, SEBI and SFIO within two weeks for better coordination, and highlighted delays caused by ignored complaints in Delhi and Mumbai.

The court set the next hearing for December 17, expecting clear updates from all agencies. Meanwhile, Sammaan Capital's share price is now nearly 19 per cent below its November 3 peak.

Cement sector set for strong profit surge in FY26

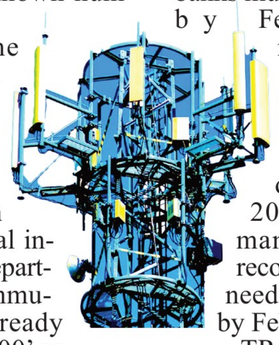
NEW DELHI

India's cement industry is expected to witness a sharp jump in profits in the Financial Year 2026 (FY26), with overall earnings likely to grow more than 63 per cent, a new report by Dolat Capital has said. This rise will mainly come from a low base and steady cost-cutting measures taken by companies across the sector. The report describes this as one of the strongest earnings recoveries for the industry in recent years, even though cement prices remain under pressure. The report notes that the sector saw mixed performance in the second quarter of FY26 because of seasonal slowdown, which kept volume growth weak. However, the rebound in FY26 is expected to be supported by strong growth in demand.

TRAI sets deadlines for '1600' calling series adoption

NEW DELHI

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has issued strict deadlines for banks, financial service firms, insurance bodies, and government organisations to fully adopt the '1600' calling series. This move aims to help people clearly identify genuine service and transaction calls and avoid fraud carried out through unknown numbers.



TRAI said the new system will reduce spam and protect customers from fraudsters who pretend to be from banks or financial institutions. The Department of Telecommunications has already assigned the '1600' series for use by regulated organisations under the RBI, SEBI, PFRDA, and various government bodies. According to TRAI, this will make it easier for the public to trust calls coming from these approved numbers.

As per the new schedule, mutual funds and asset management companies must finish the shift by February 15, 2026. Qualified stockbrokers have been given time until March 15, 2026, while other SEBI-registered intermediaries can choose to migrate voluntarily for now.

Commercial banks — including public, private, and foreign banks — must adopt the series by January 1, 2026. Large NBFCs, payment banks, and small finance banks must complete the shift by February 1, 2026, and remaining NBFCs, co-operative banks, regional rural banks, and other small entities must do so by March 1, 2026. Pension fund managers and central record-keeping agencies need to adopt the series by February 15, 2026.

TRAI said discussions are still underway with the insurance regulator IRDAI for final deadlines in the insurance sector.

So far, about 485 organisations have already adopted the new series. TRAI said the phased plan will improve customer safety and reduce impersonation-based frauds linked to financial calls.

Korean parties clash over credit after Lone Star ruling annulled

SEOUL

South Korea's political parties sharply disagreed on Wednesday over who deserves credit after a World Bank tribunal canceled its earlier order that required the country to pay $216.5 million plus interest to US-based Lone Star Funds. The International Center for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) had imposed the fine in 2022 following a decade-long dispute over Lone Star's sale of Korea Exchange Bank (KEB). An ICSID annulment committee has now overturned the ruling in full.

The ruling Democratic Party (DP) celebrated the outcome. DP leader Jung Chung-rae said he was pleased the nation would not have to pay nearly 400 billion won. Supreme Council member Jeon Hyun-heui praised government officials for achieving what she called a "miraculous" result, while Rep. Park Jie-won said the decision was a major diplomatic success for the Lee Jae Myung administration, noting that full annulments of ICSID awards are rare.

However, the main opposition People Power Party (PPP) insisted the achievement belonged to the previous Yoon Suk Yeol administration. Former PPP leader Han Dong-hoon, justice minister at the time of the appeal, demanded an apology from the DP for earlier criticizing his decision to continue the legal fight in 2022.

DP lawmakers rejected his claim, accusing him of trying to take credit.

PPP's Park Sung-hoon said the DP once claimed the appeal had "zero" chance but is now taking credit, as both Seoul and Lone Star challenged the 2022 ruling that ended in this week's annulment.

NPCI aims to transform credit usage through UPI expansion

NEW DELHI

The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) is preparing for another major change in the country's payment system, similar to how it earlier transformed debit payments through the Unified Payments Interface (UPI). A new report by Bernstein says NPCI is now set to reshape the use of credit cards in India. The report explains that India's digital payment network, supported by UPI, RuPay and other government-backed systems, has created the right setting for people to move away from old card networks. UPI currently handles more than 90 per cent of retail digital payments by volume. Its QR-based payment system has removed the need for costly card-swiping machines, leading to a sharp drop in debit card usage. Most people now prefer UPI because it is fast, easy and free. The next big change, according to the report, is the linking of RuPay credit cards to UPI. This will let users pay through QR codes while still using their credit limit.

The report says RuPay's share in UPI-linked credit card payments has quickly risen from 10 per cent to 38 per cent. This shift is expected to bring more people into the credit system. It also highlights that major fintech apps such as PhonePe, Paytm and Google Pay, which together handle more than 90 per cent of UPI transactions, are likely to benefit the most.

With credit now entering the UPI ecosystem, fintech companies may gain new income opportunities, expand their financial services and reduce dependence on older card networks. The report adds that physical credit cards may slowly lose relevance, just like debit cards, as India's digital payment system continues to grow.

Ambani Orgochem posts strong revenue and EBITDA growth

MUMBAI

Ambani Orgochem Limited has reported strong financial growth for the first half of FY26, showing a 33.51 per cent rise in revenue and a 76.77 per cent jump in EBITDA compared with the same period last year. The company posted revenue of ₹109.15 crore for the half year ended September 30, 2025. Managing Director Rakesh H Shah said the improvement came from stabilising operations at the Dahej plant, increasing the share of value-added Salicylates and Peroxide derivatives, and efficient supply-chain management.

Production at the Dahej unit has been improving steadily each month, helping raise capacity use and streamline operations. The Tarapur units also continued to perform well, supporting overall growth even as Dahej is still functioning at partial capacity. The company said it is exploring more opportunities to supply value-added products to ensure steady sales in the coming months.

During the period, Ambani Orgochem focused on improving working-capital.

PETCARE LAUNCH

RCPL launches 'Waggies' offering affordable pet nutrition

BENGALURU

Reliance Consumer Products Limited (RCPL), the FMCG arm of Reliance Industries Limited, has entered the growing pet-care market with the launch of Waggies, a new pet-food brand aimed at providing high-quality nutrition at affordable prices for pet parents across India.

RCPL said Waggies has been developed to offer complete and balanced nutrition, backed by strong scientific research. The company said the goal is to make everyday pet care easier and more accessible by offering products that combine reliable nutrition with value-driven pricing.

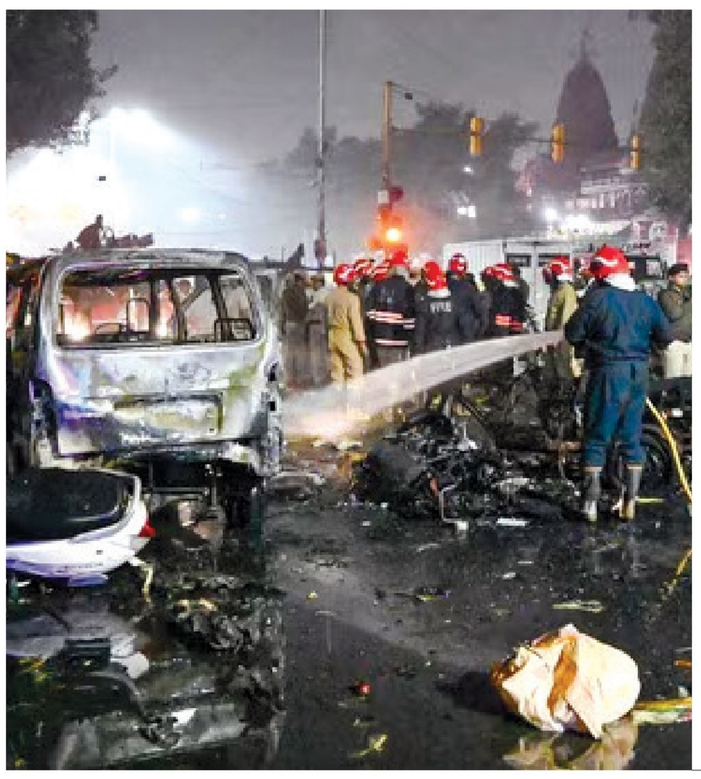
According to RCPL, the Waggies range is built on science-based formulations enriched with herbs, DHA for brain development, essential vitamins, and easily digestible ingredients that support overall pet health. The brand's core belief is that every pet deserves proper nutrition, not just those from households that can afford premium products.

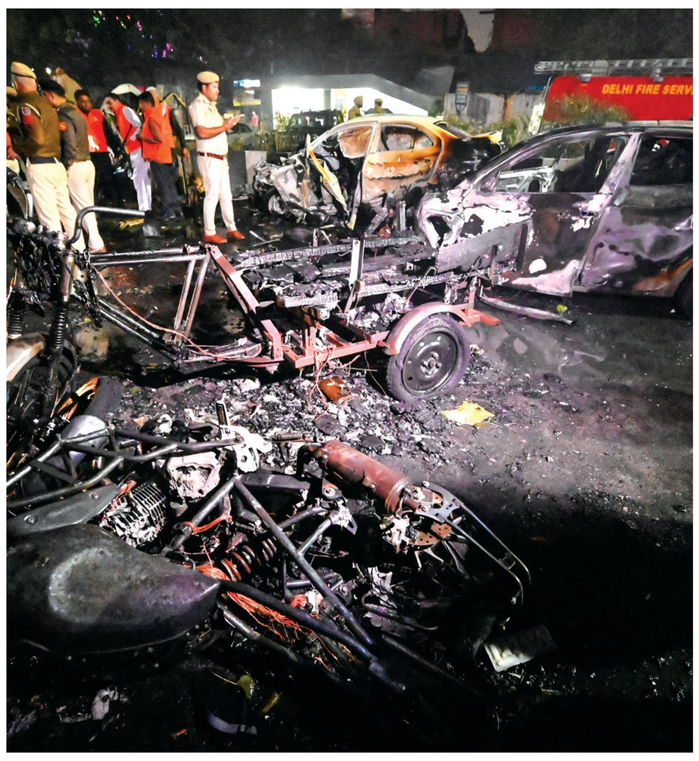
Ketan Mody, Executive Director at RCPL, said Waggies has been designed to deliver "superior value" by combining enhanced nutrition with affordability. He said the products offer extra protein, prebiotics for better digestion, balanced energy through the day, and support for joint, skin, and coat health. Mody added that the company wants to ensure that pet parents across India can access global-quality nutrition without stretching their budgets.

Guided by its philosophy of "From Few Households to Many," RCPL aims to close the affordability gap with packs starting at ₹199 per kg. Waggies is priced at ₹199 while the Waggies Pro range begins at ₹249. The brand has also introduced 100-gram trial packs priced at ₹20 to encourage new pet parents to try the products before switching fully. RCPL said the new brand will support healthier choices and make quality pet nutrition widely accessible.

Shadows over the Red Fort:

Unraveling India's Latest Terror Nightmare





The sun was dipping low over Old Delhi on November 10, 2025, casting a golden glow on the ancient walls of the Red Fort. Tourists snapped photos, vendors hawked spicy chaat, and families hurried home through the bustling streets near the metro station. It was just another evening in India's vibrant capital, a city of 30 million souls where history and hustle collide daily. Then, at 6:52 p.m., a white Hyundai i20 slowed at a traffic light. The driver, Dr. Umar Un Nabi—a soft-spoken assistant professor of medicine from Kashmir—detonated the bomb hidden in his car. The blast ripped through the crowd, killing 15 people, including innocent shoppers and commuters, and injuring 28 more. Shattered glass and twisted metal flew everywhere, turning a lively bazaar into a scene of horror.

Eyewitnesses described the chaos

screams echoing off the fort's red sandstone, blood staining the pavement, and the acrid smell of ammonium nitrate fuel oil—an explosive mix smuggled into the car over weeks. "It was like the ground swallowed us whole," said Priya Sharma, a 32-year-old teacher who lost her leg in the attack. Her words capture the raw fear that gripped Delhi that night. This wasn't just an explosion; it was a suicide bombing, the first car-borne one in the capital since 2011, and India's deadliest in years. The National Investigation Agency (NIA) quickly took over, confirming Un Nabi as the bomber—a man with a medical degree from Al Falah University in Faridabad, radicalized through online channels linked to Pakistan's Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM).

As investigators pieced together the plot, a chilling picture emerged. Un Nabi wasn't a lone wolf; he was part of a "white-collar" terror cell of educated professionals—doctors, engineers, and graduates—who used their skills to build bombs and evade detection. Raids in Faridabad uncovered 2,900 kg of explosives, enough for 32 more car bombs, hidden in a university-linked house. A video surfaced days later, showing Un Nabi calmly defending "martyrdom operations" as misunderstood acts of faith, not suicide. "When a person knows he will die for a cause, it's not suicide—it's sacrifice," he said, his eyes steady in the grainy footage. This attack, just months after the deadly Pahalgam massacre in April that killed 26 tourists and sparked a brief India-Pakistan war, has shaken India to its core. It raises urgent questions: How did a healer become a harbinger of death? What drives educated youth to terror? And in a nation of 1.4 billion, how do we stop the next blast? This feature explores the Delhi Red Fort suicide bombing through eight lenses, drawing on official probes, expert insights, and survivor stories to uncover its layers.

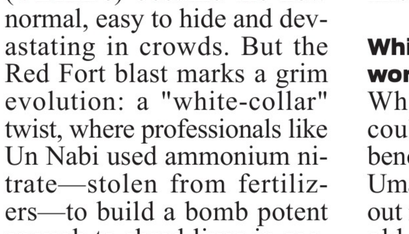
TECHNICAL SOPHISTICATION: ROCKET & DRONE PLANS

The Red Fort bomb was child's play compared to what the cell planned next. NIA interrogations of Jasir Bilal Wani, a Qazigund graduate arrested in Srinagar, unveiled a nightmare: Hamas-style drone swarms and mini-rockets aimed at Delhi's temples, bases, and hospitals. "They wanted October 7 in India," an investigator told me, referencing the 2023 Gaza assault.

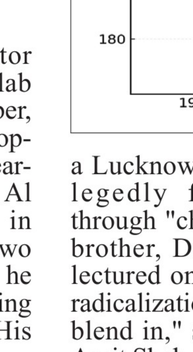
THE 'SHOE BOMBER' HYPOTHESIS

- Under the driver's seat of a car involved in the Red Fort attack, investigators found a scorched boot with TATP residue on it
- Hybrid explosive: TATP crystals mixed with ANFO
- Hypothesized to act as backup or further amplify the car explosion

DRONE ATTACK PLOT



- Srinagar grad arrested for planning swarming drone attacks on Delhi
- Commercial drones modified to deliver explosive payloads
- Planned targets: temples, bases, hospitals
- Apartment rooftop launch of PVC pipe rockets



Wani, the cell's tech whiz, modified commercial drones—bought off Amazon—to carry 5-kg payloads of TATP and nails, guided by JeM blueprints from Pakistan. Rockets? Crude but deadly: PVC pipes packed with fertilizer explosives, launched from rooftops for 2-km strikes.

The plot, codenamed "D-6," targeted six sites, including Parliament. "Drones are cheap—Rs 50,000 each—and hard to jam," says drone expert P.V. Ramana from IDSA. "One swarm could kill hundreds."

This sophistication stems from global leaks. JeM, founded by Masood Azhar, trains in Afghanistan camps, blending Taliban grit with Chinese drone tech. India's 2025 Pahalgam attack used smuggled AKs; Red Fort added chemistry. Raids seized timers, circuits, and 350 kg ammonium nitrate—controlled substances procured via fake farm licenses. When drones failed (Wani's prototypes crashed), they pivoted to cars. The implications? Urban skies as battlegrounds. Delhi's 500+ drones for delivery now face terror twins. NSG trains against this, but gaps remain—India's air defense radars spot jets, not quadcopters. "Tech levels the field," warns Brahma Chellaney. "A laptop jihadist outsmarts tanks." The Red Fort was a warning shot; the real war is aerial.

THE "SHOE BOMBER" HYPOTHESIS

Under the charred Hyundai's driver's seat lay a scorched boot, laced with TATP residue—the same volatile powder that nearly downed an American jet in 2001. NIA's "shoe bomber" hypothesis suggests Un Nabi hid a secondary device in his footwear, meant to amplify the car blast or serve as backup if it fizzled. It's a nod to Richard Reid, the al-Qaeda foot soldier who tried igniting PETN-packed sneakers on Flight 63, foiled only by quick passengers. Reid's plot, trained in Kandahar, killed none but birthed TSA shoe scans worldwide. Here, forensics show TATP crystals in Un Nabi's boot, mixed with ANFO for a hybrid blast—perhaps to pierce the car's armor if needed. "It was insurance," says a Delhi Police bomb squad officer. "Detonate shoes, turn the car into a fireball." This tactic's allure? Concealment.

Reid smuggled 10 ounces undetected; Un Nabi, a doctor, knew chemistry to stabilize it. JeM's evolution from Pulwama trucks to personal bombs shows adaptation—post-9/11, aviation tightened, so they hit streets.

But risks abound: TATP's instability caused Reid's lighter to fail; Un Nabi's may have triggered early, killing fewer than planned.

The hypothesis terrifies: everyday items as weapons. India's markets teem with unchecked shoes; one spark, and history repeats. As one analyst quips, "From soles to souls—they're stepping into hell, one boot at a time."

Drone–Rocket Plot (Red Fort Aftermath)

- NIA interrogations revealed a major terror plot involving Hamas-style drone swarms and mini-rockets aimed at Delhi landmarks.
- Jasir Bilal Wani, a tech-savvy graduate from Qazigund, modified Amazon-bought drones to carry 5-kg TATP-and-nail payloads using JeM designs from Pakistan.
- The cell also prepared crude PVC-pipe rockets packed with fertilizer explosives capable of striking targets 2 km away from rooftops.
- The plot, codenamed "D-6," included six high-profile targets—among them Parliament, temples, military bases, and hospitals.
- Experts warn that drones costing barely ₹50,000 are hard to jam and a single swarm could cause mass casualties.
- JeM's training mix—Taliban-style combat paired with Chinese drone tech—has boosted their sophistication, as seen in earlier attacks like Pahalgam 2025.
- Raids recovered detonators, circuits, timers, and 350 kg of ammonium nitrate procured using fake farm licenses.
- After drone prototypes crashed during tests, the cell shifted its plan toward car-based attacks like the Red Fort blast.

EVOLUTION OF TERROR TACTICS

Terror in India has shape-shifted over decades, from crude bombs in the 1990s to today's high-tech horrors. Back in 1993, 13 coordinated blasts in Mumbai killed 257, using simple car bombs packed with RDX smuggled from abroad. That was the era of Dawood Ibrahim's D-Company, blending mafia muscle with Islamist fury. By 2008, Lashkar-e-Taiba's gunmen stormed Mumbai's hotels in a 60-hour siege, killing 166 with AK-47s and grenades—a shift to commando-style raids.

FAST-FORWARD TO 2019

JeM's suicide bomber rammed an explosives-laden SUV into a CRPF convoy in Pulwama, killing 40 jawans. Vehicle-borne IEDs (VBIEDs) became the new normal, easy to hide and devastating in crowds. But the Red Fort blast marks a grim evolution: a "white-collar" twist, where professionals like Un Nabi used ammonium nitrate—stolen from fertilizers—to build a bomb potent enough to shred lives in seconds. NIA forensics showed traces of TATP, the "mother of Satan" explosive, hinting at lab-like sophistication.

Experts like Ajai Sahni from the Institute for Conflict Management say tactics are "globalizing." Drones, once toys, now drop grenades; cyber tools radicalize from afar. In Kashmir alone, attacks on civilians dropped 30% post-Article 370 abrogation in 2019, but IEDs and ambushes rose. The Red Fort plot, with its 3,000 kg explosives cache, echoes ISIS playbooks: low-cost, high-impact, aimed at soft targets like markets. "Terror no longer needs armies," Sahni notes. "It needs chemists and coders." This evolution preys on urban density—Delhi's 1,000 people per square km make every street a potential kill zone. As India urbanizes, so does the threat, turning everyday commutes into gambles with death.

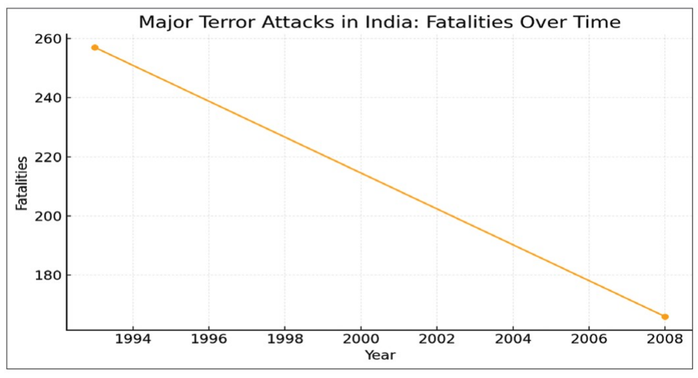
White-Collar Terror Networks

Who would guess a doctor could craft death from a lab bench? The Red Fort bomber, Umar Un Nabi, wasn't a dropout radical; he was a 35-year-old assistant professor at Al Falah University, fluent in English, with a wife and two kids back in Pulwama. Yet he drove a bomb to Delhi, dying in the flames he ignited. His story unmasks India's

"white-collar" terror networks:

Educated elites weaponizing brains over bullets.

Jammu and Kashmir Police first cracked this code in October 2025, busting a JeM-linked module after threat posters appeared in Srinagar. Eight arrests revealed a web of professionals—two doctors, an imam, engineers—coordinating via Telegram from safe jobs in Faridabad and Lucknow. Dr. Shaheen Saeed, a Lucknow gynecologist, allegedly funneled funds through "charity" NGOs; her brother, Dr. Pervez Anzari, lectured on anatomy by day, radicalization by night. "They blend in," says NIA director Amit Shah. "Doctors heal, but these poison."



This isn't new, but it's scaling. Post-2014, ISIS recruited 100+ Indians online, many graduates from Kerala and Bengal. Gulf remittances—$50 billion yearly—carry Wahhabi texts alongside cash. In the Red Fort cell, ten members plotted 32 VBIEDs as "revenge for Babri," sourcing SIMs from Nepal and cars from Kanpur. Their edge? Credibility. Un Nabi's stethoscope bought trust; his laptop hid blueprints.

Enforcement Directorate raids hit 25 sites tied to Al Falah, freezing accounts and exposing a "terror ecosystem." But why join? Recruiters like Shafi Armar, a Karnataka engineer turned JeM handler in Syria, prey on alienation. "It's ideology plus power," says counter-terror expert Rituraj Mate. "Doctors see patients die from poverty; terror promises purpose." In India, 42 banned groups thrive on this, from JeM's 500 operatives to SIMI's shadowy cells. The Red Fort blast, premature after raids spooked Un Nabi, shows how these networks adapt—failing big plots but still spilling blood. As one survivor whispered, "They wear white coats, but carry black hearts."

1993 Mumbai Serial Blasts

- Fatalities: 257
- Type: Coordinated car bomb explosions.
- Method: Crude bombs packed with smuggled RDX.
- Group/Network: D-Company (Dawood Ibrahim).
- Notable Shift: Mafia + extremist collaboration.

2008 Mumbai Attacks (26/11)

- Fatalities: 166
- Type: Multi-location commando-style terror assault.
- Method: AK-47s, grenades, urban warfare tactics.
- Group/Network: Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT).
- Notable Shift: High-tech, military-style coordinated siege.

Saina, Gade to Lead Legends' Vision Legacy Tour in Delhi

NEW DELHI

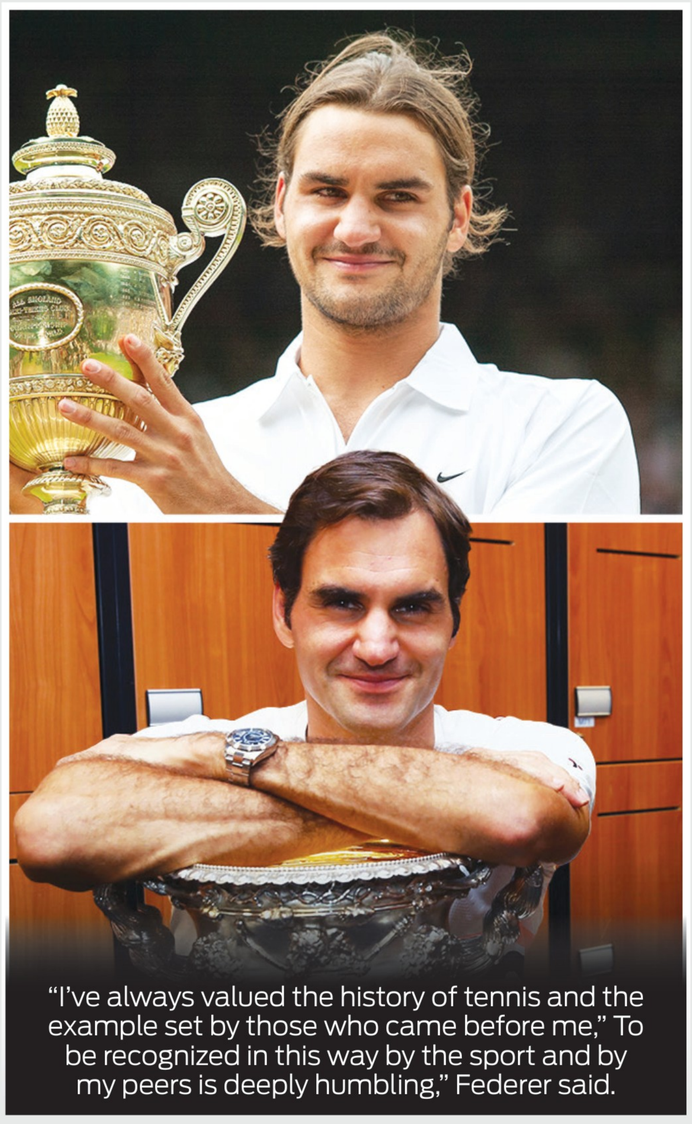
Indian badminton superstar Saina Nehwal and Danish great Peter Gade will headline The Legends' Vision Legacy Tour India, a global initiative aimed at promoting badminton through community engagement, youth-oriented activities and strategic local partnerships. The Legacy Tour, making its return to India after eight years, is scheduled for November 23 and 24 at the Siri Fort Sports Complex in the national capital.

Saina, a London Olympics bronze-medallist and one of the newest members of the Legends' Vision platform alongside Olympic champion Carolina Marin, expressed her delight at bringing the initiative back to her home country. "Badminton has given me everything in life, and it is always special to return to the court in a way that inspires young players," she said.

The opening day of the tour, November 23, will feature interactive junior exhibitions involving Saina, Gade and Legends' Vision Ambassadors, giving young shuttlers a rare chance to learn from global greats. The day will also see the official launch of A Racquet's Second Life in India, a sustainability-driven initiative that seeks to extend the lifespan of badminton equipment while supporting grassroots participation.

Badminton icons Saina Nehwal and Peter Gade will spearhead the returning Legacy Tour

Gade, the 1999 All England champion and one of the sport's most respected figures, highlighted the deeper purpose behind the programme. "This initiative has always been about giving back to the global badminton community, and I'm proud to see the message continue to grow," he said. On November 24, the second day of the tour, Legends' Vision will expand its outreach across Delhi-NCR. Fans will have opportunities to interact with Saina and Gade through meet-and-greet sessions, allowing enthusiasts to connect with the stars and further celebrate the sport's growing legacy in India.



"I've always valued the history of tennis and the example set by those who came before me," To be recognized in this way by the sport and by my peers is deeply humbling," Federer said.

Roger Federer elected to Int'l Tennis Hall of Fame in debut year

The Swiss icon becomes the only player inducted in Class of 2026, cementing his status among tennis' all-time greats

NEWPORT

Roger Federer, one of the most celebrated athletes in sporting history, has been elected to the International Tennis Hall of Fame in his first year of eligibility, the Hall announced on Wednesday. The Swiss icon becomes the only player inducted in the Class of 2026, cementing his status among tennis' all-time greats.

Federer, the first man to win 20 Grand Slam singles titles, dominated world tennis for nearly two decades, forming a historic rivalry with Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic during what he once described as "a golden time for tennis." His induction comes as little surprise to fans and peers, given his unmatched longevity, artistry and sportsmanship.

"I've always valued the history of tennis and the example set by those who came before me," Federer said. "To be recognized in this way by the sport and by my peers is deeply humbling."

Known for his graceful footwork, elegant stroke-making and serene on-court presence, Federer completed a career Grand Slam with titles across all four majors — eight at Wimbledon, six at the Australian Open, five at the US Open and one at Roland Garros. His 103 singles titles and 1,251 match wins rank second only to Jimmy Connors in the Open era.

Federer spent 310 weeks as world No. 1, including a record 237 consecutive weeks, and also led Switzerland to the 2014 Davis Cup crown. His final match came at the Laver Cup in 2022, where he bid farewell alongside Nadal in an emotional doubles contest. Also elected this year was renowned broadcaster Mary Carillo, honoured in the contributor category for pioneering commentary work and award-winning storytelling. The Class of 2026 will be formally inducted at a ceremony in Newport next August, as the tennis world prepares for future ballots featuring Serena Williams and Ash Barty.

'I've Never Faced Disrespect in India', says Kevin Pietersen

NEW DELHI

Kevin Pietersen shares heartfelt reasons behind his long-standing admiration for India

Former England batting star Kevin Pietersen has offered a candid explanation for why he is often perceived as "pro" India, revealing that two decades of uninterrupted warmth, respect and positivity from the country and its people have shaped his affection. The 45-year-old, who earned a massive fan following in India through his IPL stints and memorable international knocks on Indian soil, responded to critics and curious fans through a long post on X.

Pietersen, who continues to visit India frequently as an IPL mentor and commentator, said that not once in over 20 years has he encountered disrespect or negativity during his stays. "People often ask why I seem so 'pro' India. Answer is simple: in over 20 years and dozens of trips, I have NEVER once faced disrespect, negativity, backstabbing or bad energy there. Not once! Only love, kindness, loyalty, warmth and respect — every single time," he wrote.

He added that India had given him lifelong friendships he deeply cherishes. Emphasising that respect must be earned, Pietersen said he believes he gained that admiration by giving his best on the field, whether playing against India or representing IPL teams. "Friends who became family. Brothers for life… I like to think I earned mine by producing the goods on the cricket field year after year," he noted.

In the final part of his post, Pietersen said the unreserved warmth he received from Indians has left a lasting emotional imprint. "When a country and its people give you nothing but pure positive energy your entire adult life, that love gets returned tenfold. India gave me its heart first. So India will always have mine," he said.

Pietersen, now a mentor with Delhi Capitals, remains one of England's most prolific batters with over 8,000 Test runs and nearly 4,500 ODI runs.

Football: European 2026 World Cup qualifying tables

PARIS

European qualifying for the 2026 FIFA World Cup moved closer to conclusion, with several continental heavyweights sealing their places at the tournament in the United States, Canada and Mexico. The latest round of matches confirmed group winners, playoff contenders and a few dramatic late shifts across the 12 qualification groups.

Germany, Spain, France and Portugal all topped their respective groups with commanding records, underlining their status as World Cup regulars. Scotland, Switzerland and Croatia also secured direct qualification after consistent campaigns. Among the most dominant performers were England, who finished

Group K with a perfect 8–0–0 record without conceding a single goal, and Norway, flawless in Group I with eight wins in eight.

Playoff spots were claimed by familiar European names including Italy, Ukraine, Turkey, Poland, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Wales and the Czech Republic, alongside rising teams such as Albania and Northern Ireland. These sides will now battle through a two-round playoff route, joined by the four highest-ranked Nations League teams not already qualified.

TOP DOMINANT GROUP WINNERS

England: 8W | 0D | 0L | GF 22 | GA 0

Norway: 8W | 0D | 0L | GF 37 | GA 5

Netherlands: 6W | 2D | 0L | GF 27 | GA 4

FIFA to Probe Malaysian FA after Players Banned for Forged Documents

KUALA LUMPUR

FIFA has announced a full-scale investigation into the internal functioning of the Football Association of Malaysia (FAM) after seven naturalised players were handed 12-month bans for allegedly using forged documents to qualify for national selection. The disciplinary action stems from Malaysia's 4-0 win over Vietnam in a 2027 Asian Cup qualifier in June, where all seven players featured.

According to FIFA, the inquiry will examine how doctored paperwork was submitted to prove Malaysian lineage, identify those responsible for the falsification, and assess whether FAM's governance and compliance mechanisms were adequate. "This investigation shall aim to identify the individuals responsible… and determine whether additional disciplinary measures are warranted," the world body said.

Malaysia's football association has vowed to appeal the ruling at the Court of Arbitration for Sport, insisting that the integrity of the eligibility process must be preserved. Acting President Mohd Yusoff Mahadi said the appeal was necessary "to ensure that justice is upheld," adding that the association would cooperate fully with authorities.

Rohit Sharma

Slips to Second as Daryl Mitchell Claims No. 1 ODI Ranking

Despite Rohit's demotion, India continue to dominate the top bracket of ODI batting with four Indians, Shubman Gill, Virat Kohli, Shreyas Iyer and Rohit, remaining inside the top 10, underlining the team's depth in the format. Gill, currently recovering from a neck injury, is at No. 4 and remains India's highest-ranked batter.

DUBAI

Indian captain Rohit Sharma's short-lived stint at the top of the ICC ODI batters' rankings ended on Wednesday as New Zealand's Daryl Mitchell rose to No. 1 following a superb century against the West Indies. Mitchell, who smashed his seventh ODI hundred in the opening game of the series, became only the second New Zealander after Glenn Turner in 1979 to hold the premier spot in ODI batting.

Mitchell now sits on 782 rating points — just one ahead of Rohit — whose reign at the summit lasted around three weeks. The in-form Kiwi joins a distinguished list of New Zealanders such as Martin Crowe, Kane Williamson and Ross Taylor who have broken into the top five over the years, though none besides Turner and Mitchell have ever claimed the top rank.

Afghanistan's Ibrahim Zadran slipped to third, while India continue to enjoy strong representation in the top bracket with Shubman Gill (4th), Virat Kohli (5th) and Shreyas Iyer (8th) all featuring inside the top 10.

Pakistan players also made significant gains after their 3-0 ODI series sweep over Sri Lanka. Mohammad Rizwan climbed five spots to joint 22nd, while Fakhar Zaman rose to 26th. In the bowling charts, Abrar Ahmed jumped 11 places to ninth and Haris Rauf moved up to 23rd, though Afghanistan's Rashid Khan continues to lead the ODI bowling rankings.

Across formats, the latest Test rankings saw South Africa captain Temba Bavuma break into the top five for the first time following his resilient 55* against India in Kolkata. Shubman Gill rose to 11th despite sustaining an injury, while Bangladesh skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto climbed to equal 34th after a century in Sylhet.

India's Jasprit Bumrah retained his No. 1 position among Test bowlers, with teammates Kuldeep Yadav and Ravindra Jadeja also improving their standings. South Africa's Marco Jansen and Simon Harmer made notable progress, with Jansen additionally moving to fifth among Test all-rounders.

World Boxing Cup Finals: Returning Arundhati delivers statement performance

GREATER NOIDA

Arundhati Choudhary waited more than a year for a moment like this. After the heartbreak of missing the 2024 Olympics and enduring a long recovery from wrist surgery, the 23-year-old Rajasthan boxer announced her return to international competition in the most emphatic fashion, producing a commanding Referee Stops Contest (RSC) win at the World Boxing Cup Finals in Greater Noida.

Facing Germany's in-form Leonie Mueller—who had medalled at all three stages of the World Boxing Cup this year—Arundhati was a class apart. The former youth world champion dictated the pace from the opening bell, flooring Mueller in the second round before knocking her down again in the third to secure a decisive victory and book her place in the final.

"I am delighted to be back with an RSC win," Arundhati said after the bout. "I was nervous because my last international experience was a loss in the Paris qualifiers before my wrist surgery. But I reminded myself that this is what I've been waiting for—and now I'm back."

Her dominant outing follows a gold-winning performance at the BFI Cup 2025 in

Chennai last month, which earned her selection for India's World Cup Finals squad. Training at ASI Pune after her surgery, she had spoken earlier of wanting to sharpen her footwork and uppercuts—improvements that were on full display in Greater Noida.

Tuesday also brought strong results for India's contingent. Parveen Hooda, returning from suspension, edged Poland's World Cup silver medallist Aneta Rygielska 3-2. Reigning world champion Meenakshi Hooda (48kg) cruised to a 5-0 win over Australia's Marlon Sevehon, while Nupur Sheoran (+80kg) outclassed Ukraine's Mariia Lovchynska.

In the men's draw, Abhinash Jamwal (65kg) recorded a clinical 5-0 victory over Ukraine's Elvin Aliyev, rounding off a highly successful day for India.

You cannot win every day, I'm always cheering for India: Manu Bhaker

NEW DELHI

Double Olympic medallist Manu Bhaker has taken her below-par showing at the ISSF World Championships in stride, insisting that an athlete cannot win every single day while expressing pride in India's overall performance. Bhaker, who surprisingly missed out on a podium finish despite 13 Indian medals at the event, said she remains India's "biggest cheerleader" irrespective of who stands on the podium.

Olympic star Manu Bhaker embraces setbacks, stressing team success over personal glory

"I was aiming for medals at the World Championships. My performance was good, I scored decently but couldn't make it to the podium. My teammate Esha Singh did... in sports you cannot win every day, sometimes you lose as well," Bhaker said at the launch of ASMITA (Achieving Sports Milestone by Inspiring Women).

"For me, India should win a medal and it shouldn't be about me or someone else. As long as India is winning, in any sport, I am cheering," she added.

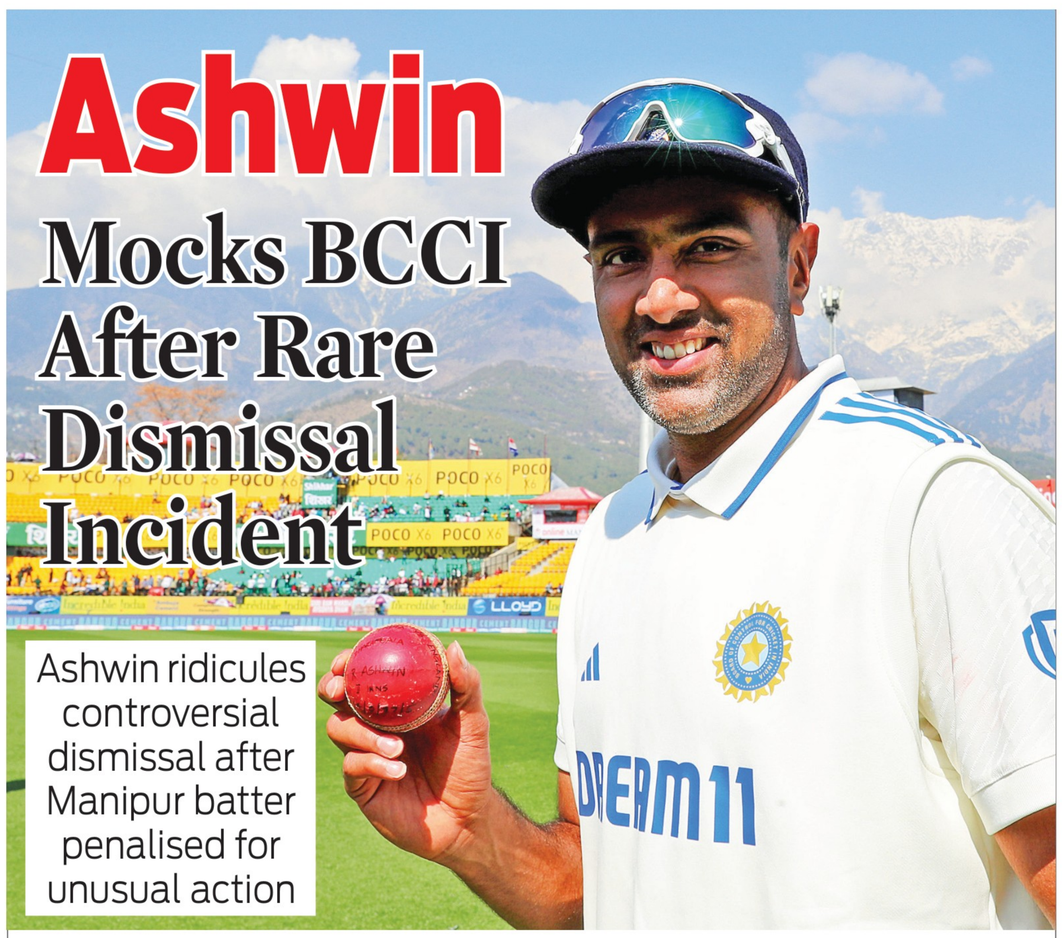
Following her Olympic highs in Paris, Bhaker has had a quieter year, with the bronze in the women's 10m air pistol at the Asian Championship being her notable achievement.

She praised India's specially-abled shooters after Dhanush Srikanth clinched gold with a world record and Mohammad Vania bagged silver at the Tokyo Deaflympics. "Their fighting spirit is incredible. We learn so much from them," she said.

Reflecting on ASMITA, Bhaker said the initiative can reshape rural mindsets about girls in sports. "Coming from a rural background, I faced issues about mentality. Initiatives like this will bring change. Women have done tremendously well in recent Olympics. It is high time we support them."

Bhaker remains the first Indian athlete to win two medals in a single Olympic Games.

Ashwin Mocks BCCI After Rare Dismissal Incident



Ashwin ridicules controversial dismissal after Manipur batter penalised for unusual action

IMPHAL

Former India off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin took a sharp yet humorous dig at the BCCI after Manipur batter Lamabam Ajay Singh was controversially given out for "hitting the ball twice" during a Ranji Trophy Plate Group match against Meghalaya on Wednesday. The rare dismissal left the cricketing fraternity puzzled, especially as the scorecard curiously recorded the mode of dismissal as "hit wicket."

Ajay Singh, attempting to prevent the ball from rolling back onto his stumps after defending it, used his bat to block it a second time — prompting umpire Dharmesh Bhardwaj to declare him out. A venue official told that the batter walked off immediately once Meghalaya appealed.

Ashwin, reacting on X, mocked the decision with a gully-cricket anecdote. "Today I got out in gully cricket for the rarest crime ever — hitting the ball twice… the entire lane shouting 'OUTTT!' louder than a World Cup final," he wrote. He followed it up with a pointed comment: "It's out only in gully cricket and not according to the actual laws of the game."

The MCC Laws do address such a mode of dismissal. Clause 34.1.1 states that a striker is out "hit the ball twice" if they wilfully strike the ball again while it is in play, except when the second strike is made solely to protect the wicket. The interpretation of "wilful" and the exception for saving the stumps appears central to the debate around Wednesday's decision.

Such dismissals are exceedingly rare in domestic cricket. The last known instance in the Ranji Trophy dates back to the 2005–06 season, when Jammu & Kashmir captain Dhruv Mahajan was ruled out similarly.

Ashwin's remarks have reignited discussions over umpiring standards and the application of cricket's more obscure laws, adding yet another quirky chapter to the Ranji Trophy's long history.

India's rapidly growing pickleball ecosystem received a major boost with new league franchises

Indian Pickleball League Unveils Five Franchises for Debut Season

NEW DELHI

The Indian Pickleball League (IPBL) has officially announced its first five franchises for the inaugural season, marking a significant leap in the sport's expansion across major urban centres. Sanctioned by the Indian Pickleball Association under the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, the league aims to position pickleball as India's next breakout sport through a city-based, fan-friendly format. The unveiling took place at a high-profile launch event in Chennai, graced by Tamil Nadu Deputy Chief Minister Thiru Udhayanidhi Stalin. Actors Sreeleela and Kayadu Lohar added star presence, while India's top pickleball talents, including Mihika Yadav and Aman Patel, reinforced the sport's growing competitive depth.

The first set of teams features representation from key metros: Gurgaon Capital Warriors (M3M Gurugram), Mumbai Smashers (Nazara Mumbai/Absolute Sports), Bengaluru Blasters, Chennai Super Warriors (Accord Group), and Hyderabad Royals (Operam Ventures). A sixth franchise is expected shortly.

The debut season will be held at New Delhi's KD Jadhav Indoor Hall at the Indira Gandhi Stadium from December 1–7, 2025, bringing together elite Indian and international players. The broadcast-oriented format is designed to draw new audiences through fast-paced, high-energy action.

Gurugram's maiden entry into a national sports league was hailed by M3M India Director Pankaj Bansal, who described it as a landmark moment for the city's sporting culture.

Gill to Travel for Guwahati Test; Participation Decision Pending Medical Clearance

GUWAHATI

India captain Shubman Gill, who sat out most of the first Test in Kolkata due to a neck injury, will travel with the squad to Guwahati for the second Test beginning November 22, the BCCI confirmed on Wednesday. Gill suffered the injury while attempting a slog-sweep against Simon Harmer and retired hurt after facing just four balls. He was later taken to hospital for evaluation and ruled out of the remainder of the match.

The 26-year-old was discharged on Sunday evening after being kept under observation. Speculation over his availability intensified earlier this week, but the BCCI clarified that the captain is responding well to treatment and will accompany the team as planned. "He will continue to be monitored by the BCCI medical team and a decision on his participation in the 2nd Test will be taken accordingly," the board said in a post on X.

Injured India captain Shubman Gill will join squad as assessment continues

Head coach Gautam Gambhir also noted that Gill remains under assessment, with further evaluation scheduled in Guwahati. India, trailing 0–1 in the two-match series, will be keen to have their skipper available for the crucial encounter, especially with the playing conditions prompting the unusual decision to schedule tea before lunch.

Curaçao Become Smallest Nation Ever to Qualify for FIFA World Cup

KINGSTON

Curaçao created one of football's greatest modern underdog stories by becoming the smallest nation by population ever to qualify for the FIFA World Cup. The Caribbean island, home to just 158,000 people, clinched their spot at the 2026 tournament with a tense 0–0 draw against Jamaica, surpassing Iceland's 2018 record for the least populous nation to reach the global finals.

The magnitude of the achievement is striking: Curaçao's population is roughly one-tenth that of Noida, which is set to touch one million residents, and minuscule compared to Delhi's 3.5 crore. Yet the Blue Wave delivered an unbeaten qualification campaign, topping Group B with 12 points under veteran Dutch coach Dick Advocaat, who missed the decisive match due to a family emergency. Their emphatic 7–0 win over Bermuda proved pivotal, giving them the edge over Jamaica by a single point.

The final night in Kingston produced gripping drama. Jamaica, coached by former England manager Steve McClaren, struck the woodwork three times and nearly scored in the 87th minute when Bailey-Tye Cadamarteri's header thudded off the post. In stoppage time, the hosts were awarded a penalty after Dujuan Richards went down, only for VAR to overturn the decision—triggering emotional celebrations on the Curaçao bench as players held on for the draw that changed their footballing destiny.

Five Indians Advance to Second Round at Australian Open Super 500

SYDNEY

Five Indian shuttlers, including top guns Lakshya Sen and HS Prannoy, marched into the second round of the USD 475,000 Australian Open Super 500 with confident wins on Wednesday, underlining India's depth in men's singles.

Lakshya, the 2021 World Championships bronze-medallist, produced a clinical 21-17, 21-13 victory over Chinese Taipei's Su Li Yang. The Commonwealth Games champion broke away early in both games, mixing sharp attack with steady defence, and sealed the match with a crisp cross-court winner. He will next face either Chi Yu Jen or Wang Tzu Wei.

Prannoy, runner-up here in 2023, displayed grit after a shaky start, overcoming world No.85 Yohanes Saut Marcellyno 6-21, 21-12, 21-17 in 57 minutes. The 33-year-old will next meet Indonesia's eighth seed Alwi Farhan.

World No.32 Ayush Shetty extended his recent rise with a commanding 21-11, 21-15 victory over Canada's Sam Yuan. The 20-year-old US Open Super 300 champion will face fourth seed Kodai Naraoka of Japan. Tharun Mannepalli fought through a tight 66-minute duel to beat Denmark's Magnus Johannesen 21-13, 17-21, 21-19. The 2023 National Games gold-medallist now faces fifth seed Lin Chun-Yi. Veteran Kidambi Srikanth, a former World Championships silver-medallist, displayed trademark resilience to edge past world No.20 Lee Chia Hao 21-19, 19-21, 21-15 in 64 minutes. Srikanth meets either Shogo Ogawa or Edward Lau next.

Kiran George pushed sixth seed Kenta Nishimoto to three games before falling 21-11, 22-24, 17-21. In mixed doubles, Mohit Jaglan and Lakshita Jaglan exited early after a 12-21, 16-21 loss to Canada's Nyl Yakura and Crystal Lai.

LAKSHYA SEN AND HS PRANNOY LEAD INDIA'S STRONG START IN SYDNEY CAMPAIGN

MATCH RESULTS INDIAN PLAYERS

- **Lakshya Sen def. Su Li Yang** - 21-17, 21-13
- **HS Prannoy def. Yohanes Marcellyno** - 6-21, 21-12, 21-17
- **Ayush Shetty def. Sam Yuan** - 21-11, 21-15
- **Tharun Mannepalli def. Magnus Johannesen** - 21-13, 17-21, 21-19
- **Kidambi Srikanth def. Lee Chia Hao** - 21-19, 19-21, 21-15

India lose to Bangladesh after 22 years

KOLKATA

India slumped to a 0–1 defeat against Bangladesh in Dhaka, their first loss to their neighbours in 22 years, continuing a dismal run in the 2027 Asian Cup qualifiers. The result leaves India as the only winless side in Group C after five matches and hands head coach Khalid Jamil his second straight defeat following last month's 1–2 loss to Singapore.

In front of over 23,000 fans at the National Stadium, Shekh Morsalin's 11th-minute strike settled the contest, finishing a swift Bangladesh counterattack that carved open India's defence. The goal also marked Bangladesh's first win over India since the 2003 SAFF Championship — also in Dhaka.

With both teams already out of contention for the finals, the match was largely about bragging rights. India, however, were left frustrated by Bangladesh's resolute defending and frequent game-management tactics, with goalkeeper Mitul Marma repeatedly going to ground to disrupt rhythm.

Jamil's side showed more urgency after the break, especially following the introduction of Mahesh Naorem as a No.10. Debutant Mohammed Sanan, brought on in the second half, provided India's best moments going forward. Five minutes after coming on, Sanan picked out Brison Fernandes with a precise cross, only for the midfielder to head wide from close range.

India had earlier come close through Rahul Bheke, who nodded wide from a Suresh Wangjam free-kick, and Rahim Ali, who narrowly missed a tap-in. Sanan later tested Marma with a low effort from distance and also cleverly stopped a Bangladesh counter, taking a tactical booking.

Refereeing decisions added to India's frustrations, particularly when Vikram Partap Singh was pulled back without a foul being awarded. India's best opportunity, however, came in the 30th minute when Marma's misjudgement left the goal exposed, but Lallianzuala Chhangte's lob was headed away by Hamza Choudhury.

Bangladesh's winner stemmed from an India corner: Rakib Hossain beat Akash Mishra and delivered an outside-of-the-boot pass to an unmarked Morsalin, who nutmegged Gurpreet Singh Sandhu to seal a historic victory.

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